

pass. Pl. 100,000 100,000 (1/1/77) / 100

Records of Vermont Birds

WINTER SEASON 1976-1977

1 DECEMBER - 31 MARCH
DONALD B. CLARK, EDITOR

This winter can best be described as harsh, not only for the birds but for the birdwatchers themselves. Vermont set a new state record with fifty-two days below freezing, and Lake Champlain froze over January 14, the earliest date in over eighty years.

Regardless of the severity of the winter, 133 species were present including four new winter records: Turkey Vulture, Swainson's Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeak and Henslow's Sparrow; three second winter records: Long-billed Marsh Wren, Veery, and Savannah Sparrow; and two species--EARED GREBE and Spruce Grouse--which showed up for the first time on Vermont Christmas Counts. (The Eared Grebe was on the Ferrisburg Count but in New York State.) But, to top it all off, the prize of the season had to be the FULMAR which dropped into a Bennington parking lot to become Vermont's first state record for the species.

Note that in accord with the seasonal changes in *American Birds* future winter seasons will run 1 December through 28 February. Please submit your records within two weeks after the close of each season to:

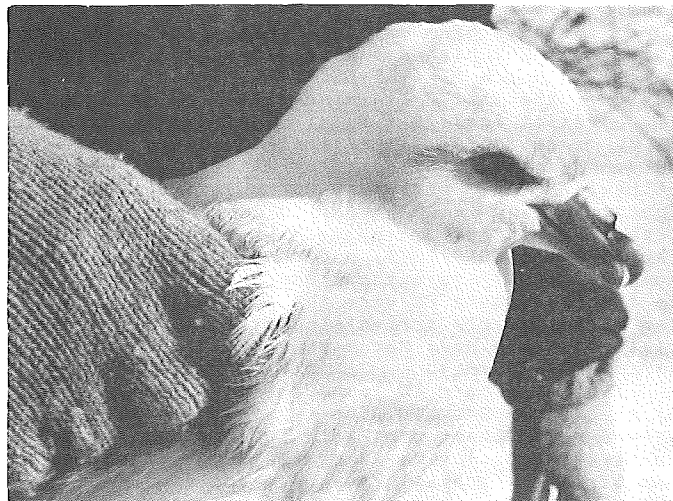
Vermont Institute of Natural Science
Woodstock, Vermont 05091

LOONS AND GREBES

Common Loons remained on Champlain, in their regular small numbers, well into December with single birds sighted on Shelburne Bay Dec. 7, 12 (BFG, PL) and on the Ferrisburg Christmas Count Dec. 18. Although unusually high numbers of Red-necked Grebe wintered along the coast, only a handful were in Vermont. Two birds on the Ferrisburg CC Dec. 18 were the last to linger. February brought reports of grounded, early arrivals from Londonderry (SDA) and Andover (fide NS) with both being successfully returned to the wild. Horned Grebes were in average numbers on Champlain into January with 37 on the Ferrisburg CC, 9 on the Burlington CC Dec. 19, and presumably the same 9 birds in Charlotte on January 3 (FO, WS). A grounded bird picked up in Hartland February 16, and brought to VINS, later died of pneumonia (SBL). A single EARED GREBE, found on Lake Champlain's Northwest Bay (New York State side) during the Ferrisburg CC (fide HPAS), is not only the first for a Vermont CC but the first record for Lake Champlain. Pied-billed Grebes were on the Ferrisburg CC in December and at Shelburne Beach Jan. 4 (BFG, PL). An exceptionally early arrival was recorded at Grand Isle March 10 (BSE, ORE, WGE). A single bird was in Burlington March 17 (BSE, ORE, WGE) and 2 were present by March 22 (FO, CSz).

FULMAR

A single FULMAR, the first for Vermont, was picked up near a Bennington shopping center on Dec. 4, following a two-day storm with reported high easterly winds. When found the bird seemed "dazed, confused (as well it might be) and appeared to have an injured foot". The bird was taken to Bennington College where it was carefully identified and cared for under the supervision of Dr.



Vermont's first state record for FULMAR--this large, gull-like tubenose is a bird of the open ocean.

Edward Flaccus. After an unsuccessful attempt to release the bird in a North Bennington creek, it was taken to Felix Neck Sanctuary, Martha's Vineyard, where it was kept in a rehabilitation pen until its release Jan. 1 (HT, EFL, CK). Full details are on file at VINS.

HERONS

Great Blue Heron numbers were incredibly high for this season with 20 reports from fourteen diversified locales, including Danby, Hartland, West Woodstock, Rutland, Burlington and Underhill (NS, FWP, EH, FCH). Although most birds had departed by the end of December, one was still present at Fair Haven on Feb. 10 (FSA). Of two birds which attempted to overwinter in East Dorset and Arlington, only the Arlington bird was successful (fide NS). The first of the early arrivals showed up in Burlington March 22 (FO, CSz) followed by single birds at Winhall (WJN) and Colchester (BSE, ORE) March 31.

GEESE AND DUCKS

Canada Geese remained on Champlain into December with a total of 237 on the Ferrisburg and Burlington CCs. Another six were found on the White River in Bethel (EHa) on Dec. 24. Two very late stragglers were at Shelburne Beach Jan. 11 (BFG, PL) with a raft of 200+ "Cans". First arrivals on March 10 in Weathersfield Center (JLW), Winhall (WJN), South Hero--174 (BSE, ORE, WGE), and Bomoseen (HB et al) found very little open water. Build up continued statewide through March with highs at Springfield (50+) the 11th (EE), Woodstock (40+) the 14th (JMN), and Alburg (200+ with one albino) by the 29th (BFG, PL). A single Snow Goose on Champlain for the Burlington CC Dec. 19 was the last of the year. The only other report for the period was a flock of 70 first arrivals in Craftsbury on March 29 (FO, JW).

A total of 135 Mallards were found on four Christmas Counts, including two on Rutland's Jan. 2. Birds overwintered in the Burlington area with a high of 25 on Jan. 29 (WGE, BSE, ORE). Ten were still on Otter Creek in Weybridge on Jan. 15 (WS, MSh). Reports of returning birds between March 16-21 came from Herrick's Cove (DC), Bethel (EHa) and Burlington (BSE, ORE, WGE) with Burlington having the seasonal high of 40. Black Ducks followed much

the same pattern as Mallards with a total of 388 on five Christmas Counts and overwintering birds in Burlington (high of 37 on Feb. 10) (BSE,ORE,WGE) and Weybridge (60 on Jan. 15) (WS,MSh). Three birds were also on the Lamoille River in Wolcott on Jan. 14, and again of Feb. 26 (LNM). The first spring arrivals were reported from North Springfield on March 3 (EE) followed by a high of 80+ in Burlington between March 19-21 (WGE,BSE,ORE). A lingering Pintail was found on the Ferrisburg CC Dec. 18. The first reported spring arrival was a single bird March 11 on the White River in Bethel (JHa) followed by a male at Herrick's Cove on the 16th (DC). The high was about 70 at the Burlington Intervale March 17 (WGE,BSE,ORE). The Ferrisburg CC found the last Green-winged Teal on Dec. 18. Two birds at Appletree Point, Burlington, March 23 (4 by March 31) were the first to return (BSE,ORE,WGE). The only report of Blue-winged Teal was two at Lewis Creek, Ferrisburg March 31 (BSE,ORE,WGE). Four American Wigeon appearing in the Burlington area by March 10, increased to a high of 10 by the 21st (BSE,ORE,SGE), and continued in "average numbers of 5-7" throughout March. Two Wood Ducks on the Ferrisburg CC were the last to be reported. Two pair of early arrivals observed in a flooded field in North Hero March 26 were the first of the spring (BFG,GG,PL).

The Ferrisburg CC found the only three Redheads of the season Dec. 18. The first Ring-necked Duck showed up on Champlain March 10 (one female) with numbers increasing to 12 by the 18th. Sightings of 3-8 birds continued through the end of the month (FO,WGE et al). Good numbers of Canvasback were found on the Ferrisburg (147) and Burlington (161) CCs. A trip to Grand Isle Dec. 15 tallied about 1000 birds (ALG,DPK). Small numbers were found in the Burlington area throughout the winter (WGE, BSE,ORE et al). Some 650 individuals were observed in Charlotte Jan. 3 (FO,WS) followed by about 200 off Shelburne Beach Jan. 11 (BFG,PL). By March 12 100+ were off Grand Isle (BFG,GG,PL) and 33 were at Burlington (WGE). The only other report was a single bird at West Lebanon, New Hampshire from March 23-28 (GFE). Good numbers of Greater Scaup were on Champlain in Dec. with a raft of 200 off Phelps's Point, Grand Isle on the 15th (ALG,DPK) and seven on the Burlington CC the 19th. March found 70+ off South Hero on the 19th (WGE,BSE) and a number off Grand Isle the 29th (WGE). Two or three Lesser Scaup were observed with rafts of Greater in the vicinity of Grand Isle Dec. 15 (ALG,DPK) and South Hero March 19 (WGE,BSE). Common Goldeneye, wintering on Champlain, totaled 505 on the weekend of the Ferrisburg and Burlington CC's (Dec. 18,19) and Jan. 3 found 100+ on a trip between Burlington and Charlotte (WS,FO). The first spring arrivals moved into the Connecticut River Valley by mid March with birds at White River on the 12th (MCH,LNM) followed by 13 at Herrick's Cove on the 16th (DC). A high of 163 was off Grand Isle on March 29 (WGE,BSE,ORE). Forty-nine Bufflehead were on Champlain for the December Christmas Counts. Two birds on the Lamoille River in Wolcott Feb. 22 would seem rather unusual (LNM). March brought a total of only six birds from Isle LaMotte, Bethel, Alburg and Burlington (BSE,ORE, EHa, BFG,PL,WGE). It should be noted that this species has taken a definite decline in this area over the last few years. It will be interesting to see if there was any buildup after the March deadline for this season. The Ferrisburg CC continues to find the less common species as with the 4 White-winged Scoters Dec. 18. Six Hooded Mergansers on Champlain for Christmas Counts were the last to be seen until five showed up in the Connecticut River Valley at West Lebanon March 20 (WGE,GFE), followed by two March 29 at the Burlington Intervale (WGE,BSE,ORE). Two birds at Derby Hill, New York the following day may have been the same birds (WS,FO). Common Mergansers overwintered on open water throughout the state with high concentrations in the Burlington area. Wayne Scott and Frank Oatman found a high of 250 in Charlotte Jan. 3. The Ferrisburg CC found good numbers (26) of

-2-

Red-breasted Mergansers on Champlain Dec. 18 and two were found on the Ottaquechee in Taftsville the following day (JDL,SBL). A good number were still present in January when 16-18 were found on the White River in Bethel (EHa). The only other report was the March 23-25 arrival of 3 birds in West Lebanon, New Hampshire (WGE,GFE).

HAWKS AND EAGLES

The Turkey Vulture is not only expanding its range in the state, but is also spending more time here. Two birds which remained for the Dec. 18 Ferrisburg CC became the first winter records for the state. The first spring arrival was at Cornwall March 19 (BBP) followed by one at the Winhall Hawk Lookout on the 29th (WJN). Goshawks were regular throughout the period with reports from eleven statewide locales. Much of their activity concentrated around feeders. On Dec. 15 one was observed being pursued by a Raven in Weathersfield (EE) and on Jan. 29 in Grafton a bird flew through a kitchen window landing dead in the sink (DC). Sharp-shinned Hawk reports were also regular for the season with 13 sightings from nine locales (averaging about four a month). This is roughly the same number reported last year which would show the species to be holding its own. The rare Cooper's Hawk was found in Bridgewater Center (SBL, JDL), Rutland Christmas Count and Westminster West (DC) during December. It was not seen again until March 10 on the Winhall Hawk Lookout (WJN). Other reports were a bird in Bennington March 20 (HT) and an immature in Danby on the 30th (NWW,BCW). The Red-tailed Hawk continued to show up in good numbers with 43 on Christmas Counts and 65+ for the season. An exceptionally high 19 on the Bennington CC was noteworthy as were 10 birds found in the Champlain area on Jan. 15 (WS). Other reports were a South Woodstock bird scratching in the snow (mousing?) (PEK) Feb. 22 and 4 birds in Charlotte (two with nest) on March 16 (BSE,ORE, WGE). The first Red-shouldered Hawk sighting came March 10 in Fairfax (HBD) followed by reports of single birds from Clarendon March 12 (LHP), Norwich the 20th (JAM), West Woodstock the 27th (EH), Burlington the 28th (WGE), and Winhall March 29 (WJN). It was a good winter for Rough-legged Hawks (49 reported) particularly in the Champlain Valley where it was not unusual to see 8-10 birds on a day's drive through the area. A high of 15 was reached Jan. 15 (WS,MSh). Birds tended to run 50/50 in regard to color phase. Birds drifted as far south as the Bennington and Saxtons River areas tending to point to food problems farther north. The final report was a light phased bird in Tinmouth March 3 (NWW,BCW). An adult Bald Eagle on the Ferrisburg CC was the only one reported for the season. Golden Eagle reports persisted in the Londonderry area throughout the period although never confirmed or detailed. Another report Dec. 23 in Westminster West, although unconfirmed, was supported by such impeccable details your editor felt it viable. A single Marsh Hawk on the Ferrisburg CC Dec. 18 was the final report of the species until an adult male was observed in Irasburg March 14 (FO,CSz). The first spring Osprey on Lake Fairlee March 10 (CBH) was soon followed by a pair in Bethel the 17th (EHa).

A possible sighting of the exceedingly rare GYRFALCON in Wolcott on Dec. 19 (fide FO) was exciting as was one over the Winhall Hawk Lookout Jan. 31 (WJN). An adult flying east at the Winhall Lookout March 12 was the only Peregrine Falcon report of the season (WJN). There were three Merlin reports for the period. A bird was observed flying low over a Woodstock field Dec. 4 (JMN), followed by one on the Ferrisburg count Dec. 18. March 31 brought a report of a bird flying over a field in Tinmouth (GTL). American Kestrels were in average numbers for the season with small numbers wintering in the Burlington area (WGE). The first sign of returning birds came from Putney March 19 (DC), followed closely by birds in Chester, Rockingham and Winhall (DC,WJN). A mating pair was found in Wallingford March 31 (NWW,BCW).

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

The introduced Turkey continues to flourish to the point of overriding and expanding its original historical range. Up to 35 birds were reported in the Clarendon area (LHP) and their situation in the Woodstock-Pomfret-Reading area was described as a "population explosion" (SBL). The first SPRUCE GROUSE to show up on a Vermont Christmas Count were two birds in Island Pond Dec. 18 (LNM). Four were discovered in the same area Dec. 28 by Frank Oatman et al. Ruffed Grouse remain stable and in good numbers although they are one of the least reported of our resident species. Five Gray Partridge were observed in a Grand Isle cornfield Feb. 11 (BFG,GG). This is the first time in a number of years that this introduced species has been found during the winter season. A few introduced Ring-necked Pheasant continue to show up throughout the state. This winter birds were observed in Saxton's River, Bridgewater and Burlington (DC, WGE,GG).

SHOREBIRDS

A Killdeer lingered through the Dec. 18 Bennington CC. First arrivals were noted March 10 in South Royalton (BT), Woodstock (MCH,LNM) and Clarendon (LHP), followed by sightings at Winhall and Saxtons River March 12 (WJN,DC), Burlington March 16 (WGE), Hartford March 19 (GFE) and Middlebury March 25 (WME). American Woodcock were first observed in Hartford March 11 by George Ellison followed by reports from East Barnard (JDI) and Burlington March 20 (WGE). The only Common Snipe of the season was a single bird on the edge of a wet field in South Hero March 12 (BFG,GG,PL).

GULLS

Glaucous Gulls continue to return in small numbers to the Burlington waterfront. This year 3 immatures were present most of the season with the final sighting a single bird Feb. 5 (WGE,BSE,ORE, BFG,GG,PL,WS,FO,DPK,ALG). A single Iceland Gull was found in the vicinity of the Burlington landfill from Dec. 4-22 (BFG,PL). Great Black-backed Gulls, present in the Burlington area through late February (WGE,BSE,ORE), reached a high of 12 on Jan. 3 (FO,WS). A bird seen from the Grand Isle ferry March 10 was the last of the season (WGE, BSE,ORE). Herring Gulls were in average numbers for the Champlain Valley Christmas Counts (187), with a few remaining to winter in the Burlington area. Two birds were found on the Connecticut River during the Dec. 20 Saxtons River CC. March 10 brought the first migrating flocks (ca. 24) to Burlington (BSE,ORE,WGE) followed by a half dozen birds at Herrick's Cove on March 29 (DC). A total of 670 Ring-billed Gulls were tallied on the Champlain CC's. A small flock of 15 at Burlington March 9 had grown to around 300 by March 17 (BSE, ORE,WGE). A single bird was present at West Woodstock March 26 (EH) followed closely by a respectable flock of 13 at Herrick's Cove March 29 (DC). Bonaparte's Gulls were present in excellent numbers for Dec. with 100 birds on the Ferrisburg CC.

DOVES

Rock Doves remained in their usual good numbers, ugh! Mourning Doves were present at feeders, in small numbers, all winter. Highs were at Reading (50) Dec. 8 (MPR), Wallingford (15) Jan. 1 (BCW) and Burlington (61) which remained throughout the period (WGE).

OWLS

Screech Owls were reported in good numbers for the season, particularly during Dec. with reports from Grand Isle Dec. 15 (ALG,DPK), Ferrisburg CC Dec. 18, Benson (fide ALG) and Burlington (2) Dec. 19 (BFG et al). A high of 3 birds was found in Middlebury Jan. 24 (fide WS) and single birds were heard again in the area during February and early March (WS). These sightings are encouraging after

their rather drastic decline here. Some 16 statewide reports of the resident Great Horned Owl were received with the only sour note coming from Winhall where Bill Norse felt the species was declining. Only 3 Snowy Owls moved into Vermont during the winter; Dummerston Jan. 19 (LPM), Ascutney Jan. 25 (BRo), and Fair Haven Feb. 9 (FSA). This species is about due for an invasion. Good numbers of Barred Owls were noted with reports from Island Pond (FO), Winhall (where they are felt to be declining with only 5 records for the season-WJN), Clarendon (LHP), Weathersfield (EE), Saxtons River (DC), Craftsbury (FO), Wolcott (LNM), Tinmouth (GTL), Rutland and Woodstock (MCH,JMN). Wayne Scott found a pair of the uncommon Long-eared Owl in Middlebury on March 4. The oblique Saw-whet Owl showed up in excellent numbers with 12 birds from ten statewide locales.

KINGFISHERS AND WOODPECKERS

Belted Kingfishers continue to winter over in respectable numbers (16 reports) with the first spring arrival in West Rutland March 17 (JCT). A bird in Winhall March 31 was described as early for that area (WJN).

Nine Common Flickers were present for the Ferrisburg and Burlington CC's. Birds remained in a number of locales for most of the period including Burlington proper (1 male feeding on sumac) Jan. 5-Feb. 26 (GG), 1 male at Shelburne Beach Feb. 22 (BFG,PL) and a number which remained around Cornwall all winter (BBP). The first spring arrivals were noted in Burlington March 15, 16 (BSE,WGE) and in Winhall (early) March 31 (WJN). Pileated Woodpeckers seem to be on the increase statewide with seventeen being reported. The rare Red-headed Woodpecker was reported from Charlotte and Fairfield Jan. 3 living on sunflower seeds (via FCH). Two unusually tardy Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found on the Bennington and Brattleboro CC's in mid December only to be followed by an equally early arrival in Cornwall March 1 (BBP). Hairy Woodpeckers, in average number throughout most of the state (195 on Christmas Counts), were down in the Champlain region. Alan Pistorius found them completely absent in the Vergennes area. Downy Woodpeckers were in good numbers statewide (316 on counts) although arriving at feeders late. Larry Metcalf reported them to be totally absent in the Wolcott area for the previous 12-15 months. A male with an extraordinary three-inch bill showed up at a Bethel suet feeder February 21 (LP). It was not surprising that three of the four Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers reported came from the Island Pond area, with single males on Dec. 18 and Jan. 15, 16 (FO, BSE, ORE et al). Larry Metcalf found the fourth, a male in Bear Swamp, Wolcott, Feb. 7. The only report of the rarer Northern Three-toed Woodpecker was a male found by a party on the Island Pond CC, Dec. 18 (WGE, JAM).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

The Eastern Phoebe invaded the state on March 10 with first sightings in no less than ten locations from Westminster to Plainfield.

Twenty Horned Larks in West Windsor Dec. 3 (JLB,ALG) were followed up by 80 on Christmas Counts. Many wintering flocks were reported with notable highs of 34 (northerns) on Grand Isle Jan. 27 (WGE, BSE, ORE), ca. 50 at Vergennes by mid January (AP), and 73 (mostly Prairie) on Grand Isle Feb. 23 (WGE, BSE, ORE). Two northerns were also at Hartford Feb. 23 (GFE).

Tree Swallows remained late and arrived early. Three stragglers in Woodstock on Dec. 1 were exceptional (JMN) and three in Springfield on the only sunny day between weeks of cold weather March 29 were a surprise (DC). Four birds at Sand Bar (WGE, BSE) and 4 singing in Colchester (BFG,PL) also arrived on the 29th. The 30th brought a small group to Bethel (EHa) and 3 birds checking out nesting boxes in Woodstock (JMN).

JAYS THROUGH CREEPER

Three Gray Jays were found in the boreal for-

ests of Island Pond on the Dec. 18 Christmas Count (WGE, JAM). A single bird was found in the same area Jan. 15 followed by two on the 16th (FO, BSE, ORE). One had drifted exceedingly far south to a Norwich feeder by Jan. 8 (HSR), while a bird in Bethel Jan. 11 was the first seen there in over two years (EHa). The final report of the season came from the Woodstock area March 2 (fide SBL). Blue Jays, reported in average numbers throughout most of the state, were found to be low at a few scattered feeders. On the other hand Frank Oatman described them as "especially abundant in Craftsbury". The Common Raven continues to increase statewide showing up on over half of the December Christmas Counts. Highs of 8 in Woodstock Dec. 15 (JDL), 26 at the Londonderry dump Dec. 21 (ALG, DPK) and 4 in Saxtons River Jan. 27 (DC) were especially noteworthy. Common Crows, present in average numbers throughout their regular winter range, also showed up in Woodstock (SBL) and Winhall (WJN) where they do not normally winter. An early buildup was noted in Vergennes March 2 (AP), with a high of 1600-1800 birds in Charlotte March 6 (BSE, ORE, WGE). Most feeder reports showed Black-capped Chickadee numbers down, giving some indication that many may have moved farther to the south. Small numbers of Boreal Chickadees were reported from the Northeast Kingdom (Island Pond, Craftsbury, Wolcott) with a high of 8 on the Island Pond CC Dec. 18 (FO, LNM et al). Only a few Tufted Titmouse were found in the southern counties of the state during the period. The Saxtons River and Brattleboro CC's had 4 and 2 respectively in December and pairs were reported in Arlington, West Sandgate and Manchester during January (fide NS). Although the White-breasted Nuthatch was reported in near average numbers throughout much of the state, there was some concern over the low numbers at feeders (ie. Tinmouth, GTL, and Strafford, HR). The Christmas Count totals would also tend to show some decline in the species over the last two years--only 285 were totaled on 9 counts this year as opposed to 336 last year and 388 the previous year. Red-breasted Nuthatches, on the other hand, were found in above average numbers statewide, although fewer numbers showed up at feeders. 556 (almost double the number of White-breasted) showed up on eleven CC's with highs of 107 at Craftsbury and 112 at Ferrisburg. On Jan. 31 Larry Metcalf counted 25 in one and one half hours on 35 acres of coniferous forest. The Brown Creeper was found in its usual small numbers. 44 were totaled on nine CC's in December and two were heard singing in Huntington March 20 (WGE).

WRENS

A small number of Winter Wrens were once again present for the season with single birds on the Bennington, Ferrisburg and Winhall CC's and one in Norwich on Jan. 11 (WGE). A Carolina Wren at a Plymouth Village feeder Dec. 27 was a first for the Ottaquechee Valley (SBL). An unexpected LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN, found in a Westminster marsh Dec. 20 (ABI et al) became the second winter record for this species.

MOCKERS

The Mockingbird seems to have established itself in small numbers within the state with 20 birds being reported throughout the season. A high of five in Burlington for the CC became the nucleus for three that wintered through in that area. Other reports came from Bennington, Saxtons River, Brattleboro, Rutland, Weybridge and Hardwick. The early arrival of a singing Gray Catbird in Barre, March 26, was noteworthy (RJ). A Brown Thrasher was present for the Plainfield CC Jan. 1 and a bird observed in Salisbury through the latter part of February presumably wintered there (BBP).

THRUSHES

Good numbers of American Robin overwintered in the state with 147 on CC's and well over 200 birds reported throughout the season. Birds were observed feeding on suet, hamburger, sumac, buck-

-4-

thorn, and bittersweet. First arrivals showed up in early March with sightings at North Hartland on the 5th (ECS). Reports came in steadily the remainder of the month. The Hermit Thrush lingered well into the season with reports of single birds from Bennington, Winhall (WJN), Saxtons River and Londonderry (DPK, ALG, DC) in December and in Cornwall (BBP) and Putney (fide LPM) on Jan. 16 and 20 respectively. An unusually late SWAINSON'S THRUSH, Vermont's first winter record, was caught in a trap of the Grafton Grouse Project Dec. 14. The bird was studied some time before being released (PS fide DC). Vermont's first wintering VEERY was observed feeding near a weedy patch on a snow covered road in Woodstock Dec. 3 (MCH, SBL). Doug Kibbe reports this to be only the second documented winter record for the Niagara-Champlain region. The Eastern Bluebird lingered late. December saw the Bennington and Ferrisburg CC's recording 6 and 2 respectively. One was observed in Dummerston Jan. 28 (LPM) and 4 were found feeding on suet in Ferrisburg Feb. 28 (BSE, ORE) (Did these birds overwinter??). March 1 brought a report from Cornwall (BBP) followed by sightings from Wallingford (NWW, BCW), Bethel (CM), Gale Meadows (WJN), West Rutland (LHP), North Woodstock (EH), Pomfret (EEB) and Tinmouth (GTL) in that order.

KINGLET THROUGH WARBLER

Small numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported from Clarendon, Winhall, Woodstock, Wolcott, Fair Haven, Springfield, Strafford, Manchester and Grafton with highs of 24 and 8 on the Ferrisburg and Saxtons River CC's (91 were totaled on ten counts). A single Ruby-crowned Kinglet was still in South Burlington Dec. 2 (BFG) and one was in Ferrisburg on Dec. 16 (AP). A bird found on the Ferrisburg CC on Dec. 18 was not believed to be the same as the previous bird. The only record of Bohemian Waxwings this season was a mixed flock of 80 Bohemians to 20 Cedars which remained in Cornwall from Feb. 26-March 19 (BBP). Cedar Waxwings, absent throughout most of the state, concentrated in the Champlain Valley. The Ferrisburg and Burlington CC's totaled 472 in mid December. Later reports came from Cornwall, Burlington and Grand Isle.

Thirteen Northern Shrikes showed up on seven CC's with Ferrisburg having a high of 4. This was just the start of a good year which found no less than 22 reports. Birds were heard singing in Vergennes Feb. 9 (AP), Tinmouth March 12 (GTL) and Island Pond March 13 (FO, CSz). The only Loggerhead Shrike was an adult observed buzzing a Flicker and Mourning Dove at Keeler's Bay on Champlain March 16 (BSE, ORE, WGE).

As the Starling continues to flourish statewide, Winhall was able to report its first winter record for this species (WJN). Fourteen Yellow-rumped Warblers invaded the Ferrisburg CC area with at least one remaining to overwinter (AP). The only other record came from Putney Jan. 27 (fide LPM).

HOUSE SPARROW THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

Like the Starling, the House Sparrow continues to flourish, 4082 were tallied on CC's alone. Three tardy Eastern Meadowlarks were still present at West Lebanon, New Hampshire from Dec. 6 through Jan. 9 (WGE, GFE, GL) and four were found at Bridport on Jan. 5 and 15 (WS). Very early arrivals were present at the VINS Woodstock preserve on March 12 (SBL) followed by sightings in Burlington March 15 (WGE) and Craftsbury March 17, 20 (FO). Additional sightings came from South Strafford March 24 (HR), North Hero (25) the 26th (BFG, GG, PL) and Winhall March 28 (WJN). Small numbers of Red-winged Blackbirds overwintered in North Hero (BSE, ORE, WGE) and Bethel (LP). The first spring migrants began to arrive the end of February with a pair at Plainfield February 25 (MVE) followed by birds at Hartland Feb. 27 (PBP) and Windsor and Grafton March 1 (JEH, DC). Birds continued to arrive throughout March with highs of 300+ at Clarendon March 10 (LHP), 200 at Craftsbury the 21st (FO) and 500+

White 76-71

at Burlington March 25 (WGE,BSE). An apparent male, with a white patch on the back of the head, was found at a West Woodstock feeder March 31 (SMo et al). A total of six Rusty Blackbirds were counted on the Ferrisburg (1), Saxton's River (3) and Brattleboro (2) CC's. The first migrant (1 male) showed up at Craftsbury on March 14 (FO,CSz), followed by reports from Winhall March 16 (10 by March 31) (WJN), Wallingford the 18th (BCW) and West Lebanon, New Hampshire (24) on March 20,21 (GFE, GL). Common Grackles were found singly on the Burlington, Woodstock, Brattleboro and Rutland CC's. A flock (?) was present at a Duxbury feeder Jan.4 (HBD) and one was at a South Burlington feeder Feb.22 (BFG,PL). First arrivals in Burlington March 5 reached a maximum of 1000+ birds late in the month (WGE). Other arrival dates were Grafton March 8 (DC), Vergennes March 9 (AP), South Stratford, Woodstock, Clarendon and Winhall March 10 (HR,JMN,LHP,WJN), and Craftsbury (25) on March 11 (FO,JW). Of 322 Brown-headed Cowbirds tallied on nine CC's, Saxton's River had 221 making it Cowbird capital of the state. Six were found in Wolcott Dec.27 (LNM) and 50+ wintered in South Hero (BSE,ORE,WGE). West Woodstock produced a single bird Jan.16 (EH). The first spring migrant was in Clarendon March 15 (LHP).

GROSBEAK THROUGH SPARROW

Eight CC's totaled 260 Cardinals during December with highs at Saxtons River (53) and Bennington (51). The February census showed some 856 birds within the state, a substantial drop from the high of 1608 in 1974. This could be due simply to a laxity in reporting as most signs show the species on the increase statewide. A probable BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK showed up at a South Barre feeder on Feb.7 (fide MFM). According to Birds of Vermont this would be the first winter record and only the second record for the state. The Evening Grosbeak was as erratic and unpredictable as usual with above average numbers in some areas and below in others (i.e. Present all winter in Craftsbury where they are unusual, and down in the Champlain region where they are usually fairly common. The species, as a whole, seemed to arrive late in most areas. 4927 were found on eleven CC's with highs at Saxtons River (744) and Plainfield (1043). An albino was reported at a Sharon feeder Jan.4 (LLa) and a partial albino was in Grafton March 13 (DC). Explosive, amazing, commonest, eruptive were a few of the adjectives used to describe the Purple Finch invasion, which brought flocks of 20-30 birds to feeders statewide. Wayne Scott reported the species as common for the southern half of the state even during the breeding season. 350 were banded in Plainfield throughout the period (MFM) and high reports came from Charlotte-Shelburne (260+) Feb.6 and Burlington (170+) March 5 (WGE). A total of 2197 were found on eleven CC's with highs in the Champlain region. Although reports varied from area to area, the Pine Grosbeak population seemed to be a fair one (425 on nine CC's). Bill Norse called it a "mild invasion" in the Winhall area with 30 the maximum, and Craftsbury had fair numbers with 12-25 a day (FO). The Champlain region reported the only marked decline with very few in the Middlebury-Vergennes area (WS,AP) and a small flight in the Shelburne section (maximum 29 on Feb.16 (WGE,BSE,ORE). House Finches, which have only recently made their way into the state nesting records, now show signs of becoming winter residents as well. Single birds were found on the Ferrisburg and Brattleboro CC's (Dec.18, Jan.1) and a pair were observed eating burdock seeds in Rutland Dec.28 (CP,EP). The only Hoary Redpoll of the season was a single male in a flock of 25 Commons which was gathering sand by a roadside at Lake Willoughby Dec.28 (FO et al). Very few Common Redpolls wintered in the state. A high of 66 on the Plainfield CC was noteworthy as were the flocks of 25 at Lake Willoughby (FO) and 20 at the Underhill dump Feb.8 (PL). Reports of 2-6 birds also came from Rutland, Woodstock (SBL), Morrisville, Wolcott (LNM) and Craftsbury (FO). Pine

Siskins were few and sporadic with 1-12 being reported from Windsor (TW), Woodstock (EH), South Stratford (HR), Winhall (WJN), Burlington (WGE), Wolcott (LNM), Craftsbury (FO), and Rutland (DPo). The only large flock recorded was one of 200+ at the Underhill dump Feb.1 (PL). Of the 406 found on Christmas Counts, Plainfield had 48. Substantial numbers of American Goldfinch were present at feeders throughout the season. A total of 1671 on eleven counts with highs at Woodstock and Burlington (300,257) was noteworthy. Crossbills were scarce throughout the state this season. Red Crossbills in particular were found only as single birds or in pairs. The Burlington and Plainfield Counts produced only 2 a piece. The only other birds were one at Greensboro (FO,CSz) Dec.31, 3 at Bear Swamp, Wolcott (LNM) Jan.5, one at Winhall (WJN) Feb.19 and a high of 21 in Windsor (TW) the end of December. White-winged Crossbills were found in larger numbers with a high of 30 in Island Pond (FO et al) Dec.23 where they remained at least through January. Three to eight birds remained in the Plainfield area throughout the period (MFM). Four birds observed in Bear Swamp, Wolcott, Jan.3 had increased to 15 by Jan.31 (LNM). The only other reports came from Bridgewater (3) Feb.6 (EH) and Winhall (2) Feb.25 (WJN).

A SAVANNAH SPARROW found by Whit Nichols on the Brattleboro CC became the second winter record for the state. On Dec.7 a HENSLOW'S SPARROW showed up in Winhall at the boreal feeder of Bill Norse. The bird was in a weakened condition and was continually attacked by Tree and White-throated Sparrows. It remained for a detailed study but probably did not survive the cold night. This is a first winter record for Vermont. 591 Dark-eyed Juncos were present on eleven counts with highs of 215 on Saxtons River and 195 at Brattleboro. The species was last seen at Plainfield Dec.4 (MFM) but remained in small numbers in White River, South Stratford, Woodstock and Springfield throughout the period. March brought the first spring arrivals with 24 at Wallingford (BCW) March 24, 40 at Tinmouth (GTL) March 25 and 100+ at Winhall (WJN) the 31st. Tree Sparrows were found in average numbers throughout their regular winter range. A total of 1316 were on CC's (highs at Ferrisburg--272 and Saxton's River--221). Eighty plus on Grand Isle Feb.12 (BSE,ORE,WGE) was notable. Buildups were noted in March as migrants moved through. Five Field Sparrows were found on the Brattleboro CC and birds wintered over at Grafton (DC) and White River (WGE,GFE) feeders. On March 31 three were found in Winhall (WJN) and one was singing in Woodstock in the company of Tree Sparrows (JMN). White-crowned Sparrows lingered into December with one at a Fair Haven feeder Dec.4,5 (FSA), 3 at a Springfield feeder through Dec.9 (MEH) and 4 on the Rutland CC Jan.2. White-throated Sparrows overwintered in low numbers in Fair Haven (FSA), Pomfret, Sandgate (NS), Springfield (MEH), Weathersfield (EE) and Winhall (WJN), with a high of 8 in West Woodstock Jan.28 (EH). Nine CC's found 163 with highs at Bennington (43) and Brattleboro (53). Six Fox Sparrows were present for the Saxtons River CC Dec. 23. The first spring arrival was in Winhall March 10 (3 by March 31--WJN). Song Sparrows totaled 127 on CC's with a few overwintering in Burlington (WGE), Fair Haven (FSA), Hartford (WGE), Bridgewater (V&RT) and Montpelier (MFM). Birds began to return in early March with the main influx on the 10th. A scattering of Lapland Longspurs were noted in mid January in the Vergennes area and Wayne Scott reported an exceptionally high 20 in Weybridge (with Buntings and Larks) on Jan.15. The only other reports were 2 birds in Burlington (with Buntings) from Jan.29-Feb.4 (WGE,GFE) and 8 in South Hero (with Buntings) on Feb.5 (BSE,ORE,SGE). This proved to be an excellent year for Snow Buntings with no less than 25 statewide reports of flocks of 50-100 birds. A few notable highs were recorded in the Champlain Valley including 200+ in Bridport Jan.5 (WS), 510 in Grand Isle County Jan.27 and ca. 700 in Grand Isle County Feb.5 (BSE,ORE,WGE). □

CONTRIBUTORS

SDA	Stan Allaben	GTL	George T. LeBoutillier
FSA	Mrs. Frederick S. Allen	GL	George Ledec
HB	Hazel Beals	PL	Pat Ledlie
JB1	Jim Billings	JAM	Joseph A. Massey
ABI	Angus Black	CM	Chris Masters
WB	Mrs. Weston Blake	BM	Bob Maxfield
EEB	Eleanora E. Brooks	JMc	Julia McDill
JLB	Jenepher L. Brettell	LNM	Larry Metcalf
PMB	Paul M. Brown	MFM	Marion F. Metcalf
MB	Mary Bumps	Smo	Sharon Moore
HDC	Mrs. Howell D. Chickering	LPM	Louise P. Mullen
DC	Donald Clark	WN	Whit Nichols
TC1	Mrs. Thomas Clifford	JMN	Julia M. Nicholson
JCo	Jean Coello	WJN	William J. Norse
WC	William Crosby	Fo	Frank Oatman
CC	Charlotte Cross	SP	Stan Parent
HBD	Helen B. Davis	EHP	E.H. Pease
DE	Dale Earle	PBP	Patricia Peat
BSE	Barbara S. Eastman	JNP	J. Newton Perrin
MVE	Midge Eastman	BBP	Bruce B. Peterson
ORE	Oliver R. Eastman	AP	Alan Pistorius
EE	Eleanor Ellis	MP	M. Poole
GFE	George F. Ellison	CP	Chan Potter
WGE	Walter G. Ellison	DPo	David Potter
WME	Wallace M. Elton	EP	Elsa Potter
EF1	Edward Flaccus	LHP	L. Henry Potter
BFG	Beth F. Gianetti	CRP	Carol R. Powell
GG	Gil Gianetti	FWP	Frederick W. Prahl
ALG	Annette L. Gosnell	DaP	David Putnam
BPG	Beatrice Guyett#	LP	Lorraine Putnam
EH	Ed Hack	HR	Herman Redden
EHa	Mrs. Eino Haikara	MPR	Mary P. Riley
MEH	Marion E. Haseltine	HSR	Harold S. Rising
HPAS	High Peaks Audubon Society	HRO	Mrs. Hilda Robinson
JEH	John E. Hinton	Bro	Bud Ross
CBH	Cecil B. Hoisington	WS	Wayne Scott
MCH	Mary C. Holland	MSh	Mark Shattuck
PH	Peter Hope	CSz	Chris Shultz
FCH	Fran Howe	NS	Nancy Simson
JDI	Judith D. Irving	ES	Elizabeth Sincerbeaux
RJa	Ruth Jackson	PS	Patrick Sousa
RJ	Bob Jervis	ECS	Eleanor C. Swaim
NJ	Mrs. Norma Johnson	BT	Bruce Talbot
CK	Cindy Kallet	V&RT	Vaughn and Ruth Taylor
PEK	Paul E. Kendall	JCT	Janet Terenzi
BK1	Brad Kibbe	ET	Eldon Thompson
DPK	Douglas P. Kibbe	HT	Helene Toolan
LLa	Mrs. Louis Ladd	TW	Tom Warren
JDL	J. David Laughlin	BCW	Betty Weeks
SBL	Sarah B. Laughlin	NWW	Wendell Weeks
		JW	Jon Wood
		JLW	Julia Lloyd Wright

Special thanks to all who contributed to the Cardinal - Tufted Titmouse Count.

NOTE: The Vermont Christmas Bird Counts have been compiled for the 1977-1978 season and copies can be obtained by writing VINS, Woodstock 05091. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Donald B. Clark, Grafton, Vermont
 Dr. and Mrs. Oliver Eastman, Burlington, Vermont
 Eleanor Ellis, Springfield, Vermont
 Hon. George F. Ellison, White River Jct., Vermont
 Walter G. Ellison, White River Jct., Vermont
 Beatrice Guyett#, Vergennes, Vermont
 Francis Howe, Burlington, Vermont
 Douglas P. Kibbe, Hoboken, New Jersey
 Sarah B. Laughlin, Vermont Institute of Natural Science, Woodstock, Vermont
 Marion Metcalf, Plainfield, Vermont
 Donald H. Miller, Lyndonville, Vermont
 Louise Mullen, Brattleboro, Vermont
 Frank Oatman, East Craftsbury, Vermont
 Alan Pistorius, Vergennes, Vermont
 L. Henry Potter, West Rutland, Vermont
 Wayne Scott, Middlebury, Vermont
 Jim Stewart, Vermont Department of Fish and Game, Montpelier, Vermont
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles White, Barnet, Vermont

MANAGING EDITOR, Sarah B. Laughlin
 EDITORIAL ASSISTANT, Julia M. Nicholson
 COMPOSITOR, Linda Ray
 ILLUSTRATOR, Grace Brigham

RECORDS OF VERMONT BIRDS is published quarterly by the Vermont Institute of Natural Science and is available only through membership in the Institute. VINS is a statewide natural history education and environmental research organization supported solely by memberships and private contributions.

\$8 - Individual, \$12 - Family, \$25 - Supporting Contributions are tax deductible.

Contributors are reminded to send in rare and unusual bird sightings at once (or to call the Vermont Bird Alert) and to submit seasonal cards promptly at the end of each season. This publication is only as complete as you make it. If you need sighting cards, write VINS, Woodstock 05091.

SPRING - 1 March - 31 May
 Editor, Frank Oatman
 SUMMER - 1 June - 31 July
 Editor, Wayne Scott
 FALL - 1 August - 30 November
 Editor, Walter Ellison
 WINTER - 1 December - 28 February
 Editor, Donald Clark

VERMONT BIRD ALERT

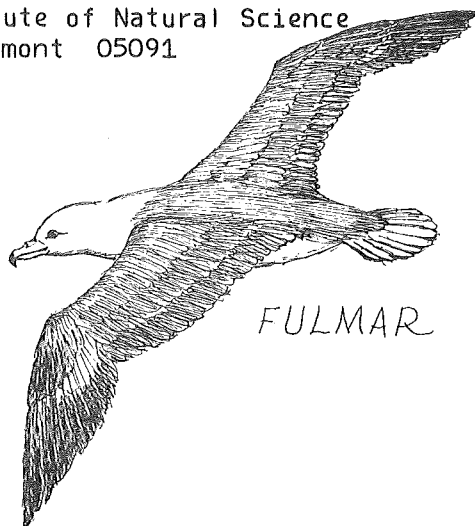
THE LATEST STATEWIDE BIRDING NEWS.
 MONDAY - FRIDAY, 6:00 pm - 8:00 am
 SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, 24 hours

CALL (802) 457-2779



WINTER EDITION 1976-1977 (published March 1978)

Vermont Institute of Natural Science
 Woodstock, Vermont 05091



U.S. Postage Paid
 Nonprofit Organization
 Woodstock, Vermont
 Permit No. 4

Ms. Julie Nicholson
 Church Hill
 Woodstock, Vermont
 05091