

# Records of Vermont Birds

## SUMMER SEASON 1979

1 JUNE - 31 JULY

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The summer of 1979 marks the third year of the Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas Project. Much of this summer field work appears throughout this report, gathered by hardworking birders of all skills volunteering their time and energy to amass baseline data on the distribution of breeding birds in Vermont.

The weather was relatively normal and uneventful for the period. The exception was a few cold rainy days followed by an early cold front in late June and early July which brought night temperatures down to 35° in cold pockets at least on one night; however this weather appeared to have more of an effect on Atlas volunteers in the field than on the birds.

The 1979 summer resulted in several noteworthy breeding records including the first Atlas confirmation and the first state breeding record of the TURKEY VULTURE. Atlasers finally located nesting PHILADELPHIA

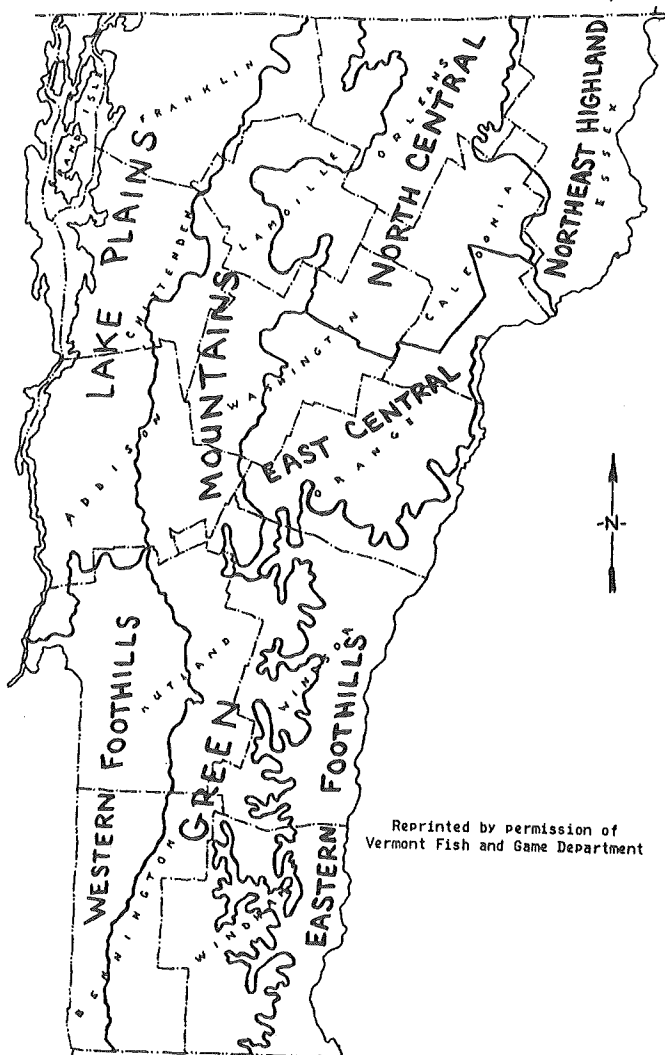
VIREOS including an incredible mile and half section of an old logging road which produced 13 individuals (5 pairs plus three individuals). Exciting "extralimital" breeding records were discovered in south-western Vermont for BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS and LINCOLN'S SPARROWS, both far south of their "normal" Northeast Kingdom breeding grounds.

Additional highlights for the season included GLOSSY IBIS reported during the summer season for the third year in a row, a late migrant Peregrine Falcon, a highlight anytime of the year, and an interesting June 16 sighting of a MERLIN in Jeffersonville.

As mentioned before, information from the Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas Project appears throughout this report. Since it was not feasible to survey the entire state within the 5 year designated period with our estimated manpower, 179 ten square-mile blocks were randomly selected for the survey sample. Referred to as "priority" blocks these 179 blocks will be atlased uniformly under the Project's criteria. Nesting records outside of the priority blocks fall into a nonpriority or extra-blocks category and can contribute to the overall picture of a species' distribution. Unless otherwise designated the numbers of blocks a species occurred in this summer refers to the total of both priority and nonpriority blocks, while the percentage of blocks a species has been recorded in represents three years of cumulative data from only the priority blocks.

In regard to the regions of the state, I have used the physiographic designations as presented by the Vermont Fish and Game Department. In addition I have used the term "Connecticut River Valley" when discussing a species that appears within close proximity to the river and, unless otherwise stated, the entire length of the state. When the term Northeast Kingdom is used it refers to the area encompassing Essex, Orleans and Caledonia Counties, which includes all of the Northern Highlands Region and a good part of the North Central Region.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF VERMONT



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### LOONS THROUGH IBIS

The Vermont Common Loon survey covered sixty-one lakes of twenty acres or more in 1979, gathering data to determine the present and past breeding status of the Common Loon in the state. A few new survey areas turned up additional breeding locations. On twenty-six lakes there were 29 territorial pairs, 18 pairs attempted to nest, 12 pairs were successful producing a total of 14 chicks (VINS). Double-crested Cormorants were present again this summer on Lake Champlain. Birds have been seen regularly on Young Island (DEC) and Four Brothers Island (HPAS) just over the New York-Vermont state line. Both are being watched for possible nesting evidence. Great Blue Herons were seen regularly in the state. They have been recorded in 31% of the Atlas Project Survey blocks. A high count of 12 Great Blue Herons present in the McCuen Slang area July 29 included an albino Great Blue Heron (BDF). Listed as "casual" in Vermont by Spear, an immature Little Blue Heron was also present at McCuen Slang July 29th (BDF). Recorded in 17 Atlas blocks in 1979 the Green Heron is listed in a rather low 28% of the Atlas survey areas for a relatively common species. Cattle Egrets nested, for a third year, in the Black-crowned Night Heron rookery on Young Island (DEC). No numbers were available. The Records received no reports of Snowy Egrets for this period; however there were two reported present just over the state boundaries at Four Brothers Island (HPAS). The only Least Bittern reports of the season were from West Rutland Marsh where one was present on June 8 and three, on July 31 (WJN). The American Bittern has occurred in 18% of the Atlas blocks around the state. Field observers found this species in 7 blocks in 1979. On June 1 a high count of 6 were located at West Rutland Marsh (WJN). Always unusual in Vermont two Glossy Ibis were reported at Shelburne Bay on July 22 and again on June 28 farther south at McCuen Slang (BDF). This represents the third summer in a row this species has been reported to the "Records."

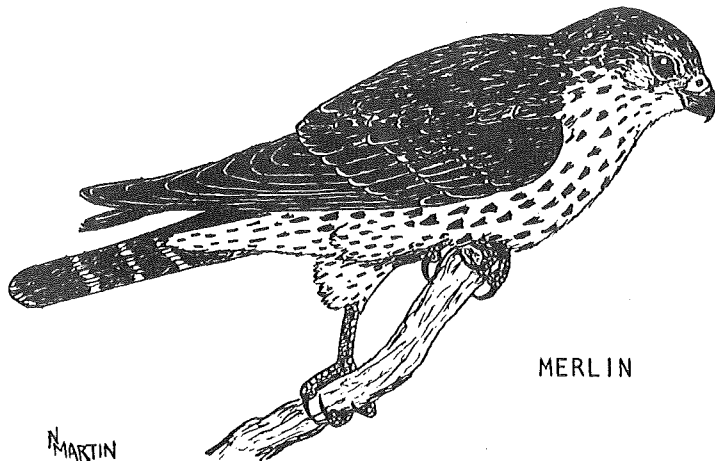
### GEESE AND DUCKS

A probable Mute Swan was observed from some distance, feeding in the Connecticut River near Barton on June 8 (RG). Introduced and nesting at Dead Creek, single pairs of Canada Geese have been confirmed nesting in Pownal, Winhall and Salisbury. This year adds a pair with downy young in Marlboro (WJN). Additional reports came from Cambridge, where approximately 30 were sighted on a sandbar in the Winooski River on June 9 (SBL et al.) and Kent Pond, where 29 were present on June 11 (EO). Mallard and Black Duck numbers were normal this season. An unusual record comes from

Camel's Hump where a female Black Duck was found on a nest with 10 eggs at timberline, 3 miles from the nearest water (CS2). Rare in Vermont the Gadwall is seen more consistently, although limitedly, in Lake Champlain. There are no Atlas breeding records yet, although a pair nested on Four Brothers Islands, N.Y. this year (DEC). Two probable nonbreeding wanderers were reported on Lake Hardwick July 7 (MFH). A Blue-winged Teal nest with eggs at Lewis Creek area and 2 individuals seen July 31 at West Rutland Marsh are the only reports for this species. Reported to the summer "Records" in 1978 for the first time, a pair of American Merganser were reported this year present all day off of Young Island in Lake Champlain on June 5 (DEC). Minor breeding areas occur north of us in Canada, the closest on the St. Lawrence River. Atlas workers reported Wood Ducks from 15 additional blocks in 1979, bringing the total number of Atlas blocks this species occurs in to 72. A male Lesser Scaup observed on Pensioner Pond, Charleston (ALG, DPK) and one off Prouty Beach in Newport (WGE, GFE) the first week in July were probably the same bird and most likely a nonbreeding lingerer.

#### VULTURES AND HAWKS

Once an uncommon but regular visitor, the summer population of Turkey Vultures has increased over the last 15 years or so to the point where nesting has been highly suspected among some state birders; therefore it was to no one's surprise, although there was much excitement, when this species was observed mating in Aitken State Forest, Mendon, by three Hawk-watchers in April (NLM). Turkey Vultures have been recorded in 37 Atlas blocks around the state. In 1979 new northerly reports of single birds sighted came from Johnson on June 10 (VBC), Richford (4 miles from the Canadian border) on July 15 (DPK, ALG) and Hardwick July 9 (MFH). The Atlas project has increased the number of hawks reported to the "Records" for the summer season; however to prevent a false impression it should be stated that Atlas coverage of falconiformes is far from representative of probable population and there is much field work to be done before the close of the Atlas Project in 1981. Individual Goshawks were reported from Cambridge (SBL, JDL), Mt. Mansfield (GFE, WGE), Lincoln (WS, AP), East Barre (BBU, RBU), Middletown Springs (GTL), Londonderry (WJN), Saxtons River (DC), and from Bellows Falls, where a nest with 3, possibly 4, young was located (EE). With these additional reports this species has been recorded for only 13% of the Atlas blocks. The Sharp-shinned Hawk has been recorded in 17% of the Atlas blocks. Single birds were seen in Groton/Marshfield on June 15 (DBa) as well as in Bakersfield and Jefferson (ALG, DPK), Wallingford Pond (WGE, GFE), Lake Ninevah (SBL), Manchester (RuS) and Saxtons River blocks. On June 6 an adult carrying prey was sighted at the Green River Reservoir (FO) and one adult and an immature were sighted in North Ferrisburg on July 21 (MCD, JID). The majority of Cooper's Hawks recorded under the Atlas Project by 1979 occurred in or near the Mountain Regions the length of the state. The first confirmation of this species occurred in Saxtons River where an adult was viewed on the nest (DC). Additional "possible nesting" records were reported from Morgan (JEC), Middlesex (JH) and Norton (LNM). Well distributed around the state, the Red-tailed Hawk has been recorded in 58% of the Atlas survey blocks. Observers found this species in 26 Atlas blocks in 1979. Red-shouldered Hawks do not appear as widespread or as numerous as the above, although there were 5 confirmations of this species in 1979. Nests with young were observed in Bomoseen State Park (BJG, MWG), and Rutland (NLM). Nests, with a brooding adult present, were located in Essex Center area (MLY), West Rutland (WGE, GFE) and Windsor/Brownsville area (EE). Records of Broad-winged Hawks are more indicative of their distribution in Vermont than records for the previous species. The 35 new Atlas records in 1979 helped to fill out this distribution which primarily covers the Connecticut River Valley to the western limit of the Mountain Region. There were 3 sightings of Bald Eagle for the period. An adult was observed flying in the upper Connecticut River area on June 14 (BW), a second adult was sighted on June 28 at Jonesville, Chittenden County (AMO) and a third was seen on July 6 at South Bay of Lake Memphremagog (LPr, PTH). The second Atlas confirmation of a Marsh Hawk was reported from the Shelburne area (BDF) and was the only report of this species for the season. There were no reports of Osprey present throughout the summer. Sightings of single, probable late migrants or nonbreeding wanderers were reported on June 4 at Missisquoi NWR (DEC), on June 6 at Osmore Pond (DBa), on June 15 at Canaan (JCF), July 3 at Mt. Mansfield summit (CS2) and July 22 along the Connecticut River in Windsor County (TL). For the second summer in a row a Peregrine Falcon was reported. This one was sighted on June 1 "flying in steady flight to the north" (FO) and a presumed, late migrant. A vagrant MERLIN sighted at Jeffersonville on June 16 (LNM) is the first summer record of this species since the publication of the "Records" began in 1973 and a highlight of the season. The American Kestrel was found in normal numbers around the state and is now recorded in 58% of the Atlas survey blocks.



MERLIN

#### GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

There were no reports of Spruce Grouse for this period. A rare and local breeder in the Northeast Kingdom, there are only 2 possible and one confirmed nesting records reported during the Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas Project thus far. Ruffed Grouse were in good numbers for the period. New and upgraded Atlas reports tallied to 43. Distribution is widespread although somewhat concentrated in the Eastern Foothills Region. This period's

Bobwhite reports came from West Rutland Marsh where one was heard calling on June 8 (WJN) and from a Whitingham block (LBo). The introduced Ring-necked Pheasant continues to show up here and there. This season a single bird was sighted in East Barre (ALS, FS). The Wild Turkey is almost totally confined to the western and eastern Foothills Regions, spreading out from the primary introduction areas. The eight reports this year came from Atlas blocks in Brandon (RWP, et al.), Bomoseen (BJG, MWG), West Rutland (LHT), Rutland (NLM), Dorset (RWP, CY), Manchester (RuS), Woodstock (MLW).

#### RAILS

Rail reports were few in 1979. This editor assumes this is due to lack of coverage in the marshes for this period and not the absence of rails. Two Virginia Rails were reported at West Rutland Marsh June 1 and 8 (WJN) and 3 to 4 were heard at Dead Creek July 14 (WS). A single Sora was reported from West Rutland Marsh June 29 (WJN) and 3 responded to tape at Dead Creek July 14 (WS). The one and only Common Gallinule of the period was reported at West Rutland Marsh July 31 (WJN).

#### SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

Killdeer were present in good numbers. Thirty-nine new and upgraded records were reported under the Atlas Project, bringing the percentage of blocks this species is recorded in up to 71%. Its distribution, expectedly, is statewide. Migrating Ruddy Turnstones were reported from the Lake Champlain area, 11 were seen June 5 at Young Island and one on June 13 at Button Bay (DEC). American Woodcock appeared in normal numbers. Atlasers have now located this species in 40% of the Atlas Project blocks. Common Snipe records were located in 20 blocks statewide. This species appears to be more widely distributed in the northern regions of the state. Eleven Common Snipe observed at Hardwick Lake June 11 (LNM) is a high day count for the season. The only two summer reports of the Upland Sandpiper came from the Lake Plains Regions where a single bird was reported from Sudbury (ALG) and probable breeding was reported by Atlas workers in Shoreham/Bridport area (AP, WS). Thirty-five reports of Spotted Sandpipers were reported for the 1979 Atlas season. A downy young and one adult observed at Colchester Point July 14 represent a rather late nesting record (WS). A report of "hundreds" in groups of 8-10, moving south along the Connecticut River at Guildhall, Vermont/North Strafford, New Hampshire on July 22 is an unprecedented number (TL). The migration of the remaining shorebirds was noted by only three observers and is presented in the following chart to avoid repetition.

	7/11 Lake Hardwick	7/14 Burlington Area	7/28 Dead Creek	7/28 McCuen Slang
Solitary Sandpiper	6	-	-	Present. No numbers given.
Lesser Yellowlegs	2	4	3	Present. No numbers given.
Least Sandpiper	4	13	12	-
Semipalmated Sandpiper	-	1	-	Present. No numbers given. (BDF)
	(LNM)	(WS)		

An additional Solitary Sandpiper was sighted in Brattleboro July 8 (DWV). Only a few reports of Laridae were received for the period. Not unusual in the Lake Champlain area, the only report of the Herring Gull was a nest with young on Fishbladder Island (RWK). Nesting Ring-billed Gull continued to crowd the limited tern habitat. Two immature Bonaparte's Gulls were first reported at Colchester Point on July 14 (WS). Known to nest on a few limited islands, the only report of the Common Tern was a single immature seen at Colchester Point July 14 (WS). Black Tern fared somewhat better in this season's reporting. High counts of 24 were noted at the South Slang of Otter Creek on June 19, and 28 at Dead Creek in Panton on June 21 (MCD, JID). Jim Nissen at Missisquoi NWR estimated a population of 200+ Black Terns at the refuge.

#### DOVES AND CUCKOOS

Mourning Doves were present in good numbers as we received 48 reports from Atlas observers. William J. Norse of South Londonderry reported Mourning Doves "still scarce in high elevations but new breeding locations in Winhall and South Londonderry" this year. When the Atlas Project began the nesting status of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo was uncertain. This season, 7 additional records were reported from Benson and Orwell (FWT), Shoreham (AP), Timmuth (GTL), West Rutland (WJN), North Pomfret (HCH, LNM) and Johnson (VBC), bringing the number of blocks this species occurs in to 21 blocks over the last 3 years. Distribution seems primarily confined to the Lake Plains region and the Connecticut River Valley of the Eastern Foothills region. The Black-billed Cuckoo enjoys a more widespread distribution in the state, occurring in every region. Field observers reported the species in 31 blocks. One observer from Winhall reported only "small numbers present this July, not a very good year" (WJN).

#### OWLS

The current status of the Screech Owl remains questionable. A single bird sighted at Shoreham/Orwell (WS, WB) in the Lake Plains Region where this species is thought to be an uncommon resident was the sole report for the period. In Winhall Great Horned Owl was reported "very scarce this year" with one individual seen on June 18 (WJN). A VINS canoe trip reported one individual along the Barton River July 6 and another present at Dead Creek on July 9 (LPr, PTH). In Cuttingsville one adult did not survive its roadside hunting excursion (AFS). Barred Owls were reported from 25 Atlas blocks. They are probably the easiest owl to locate for Atlas workers, since they respond readily to their imitated calls.

#### WHIP-POOR-WILLS THROUGH KINGFISHERS

A VINS newspaper article on the Whip-poor-will stimulated 16 reports from around the state. Several people reported that they had not heard this species for several years or more in their various areas. Reports ranged north and south in the Western Foothills and Lake Plains Regions and the Connecticut River Valley. Reports of Common Nighthawk present in East Barre and Norwich Atlas blocks are the only reports for the period. Chimney Swifts were in good numbers with 40 Atlas reports for the period. This species has been found in 71% of the Atlas survey areas. Courtship flight of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in North Ferrisburg was observed on June 3 and 4; the first fledglings appeared at the feeder on July 18 (MCD, JID). Observers reported this species in 45 blocks. A widespread breeder in most areas the Belted Kingfisher was reported in 39 blocks by Atlas workers.

#### WOODPECKERS

The Common Flicker, a common nester in Vermont, was reported from 55 Atlas blocks. This figure added to previous survey years shows this species

in 88% of the Atlas Project blocks. Pileated Woodpeckers were reported in normal numbers. Atlas workers recorded them in 36 blocks with only one confirmed nesting record from Middlesex (JH). The Red-headed Woodpecker is a limited nester in the Lake Champlain Valley. In addition to one present in Shoreham in June and early July (AP), an adult was seen at Waterville on June 16 (LNH), and two were seen at East Fairfield throughout July (DFI). Both these north-easterly Lake Plains records are new locations for this species. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported in normal numbers. Field observers reported from 40 blocks. Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers were reported from about 45 blocks each. Fledgling Hairy Woodpeckers were first noted visiting a Brownsville suet feeder with adults by June 25 and followed by Downy fledglings on July 4 (BMH). In Winhall, Mr. Morse reports both species present in "normal numbers." Known as a rare and local breeder in the North-east Kingdom, it was with some surprise to Atlasers to find a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker nest with at least one visible, nearly fledged young in southern Green Mountains (GFE, WGE). The nest was located in a flooded stand of dead spruce and fir trees near Branch Pond, an area that is a proposed addition to the Lye Brook Wilderness, under the RARE II Administrative designations. A few days earlier an adult male and a second quickly viewed individual were observed in the same area (LNM, MCH, CFH). Historically this species is known to have nested on Pico Peak but all research indicates Branch Pond, east of Arlington, is the most southerly breeding record in Vermont or in Eastern United States in recent decades.

#### FLYCATCHERS

Eastern Kingbird was reported in normal numbers. Field observers reported 50 nesting records in 1979. It has been located in 85% of the 179 Atlas blocks. The Great Crested Flycatcher, as common as the above but not as visible in its habitat, was recorded in 48 areas for the period. It has now been found in 64% of blocks. The Eastern Phoebe is another common and easily located species. With 57 reports in 1979 it has been recorded in 144 of the 179 Atlas blocks. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were found fairly regularly in proper habitat not only in the North Central and North Highlands Region but the entire length of the state in the Mountains Region. More southerly possible nesting reports came from Sunderland (WGE et al.), Londonderry (WJN), Somerset (LNM), Woodford (WGE et al.) and at Haystack/Wilmington an adult was observed feeding young (WJN). The Willow Flycatcher, generally thought to be a more southern and western bird of open country in Vermont, has been reported from scattered localities in every region of the state. Field observers reported this species from Cambridge (SBL, JDL), Richmond (HGM), Brandon (RWP et al.), Ninevah (SBL), Londonderry (WJN) in 1979. Three to five individuals were observed on various June and July visits to the West Rutland Marsh (WJN, WJN). The Alder Flycatcher appeared in normal numbers. Field observers reported 23 possible and probable nesting records. Adults were observed feeding young in East Hardwick (MFH) and Pittsfield (WGE, GFE). The Least Flycatcher, the most frequently encountered Empidonax Flycatcher, was found in 54 Atlas blocks and has now been found in 77% of the Atlas blocks. Atlas workers found the Eastern Wood Pewee in 55 blocks confirming it in 12. Numbers appeared normal. Olive-sided Flycatchers were not uncommon in proper habitat. There were 24 reports for this period. In the Winhall area an observer reports this species thinly distributed "but population has come back from recent lows" (WJN).

#### LARKS AND SWALLOWS

Reports of an adult Horned Lark with food for young in Bridport on June 26 (AP) and recently fledged young in Alburg on July 1st represent only the second and third confirmation out of 10 Atlas blocks. The fact that this limited breeder nests in the expansive farm fields probably accounts for the lack of Atlas information. Observers' reports seem to indicate that swallows were in good numbers in 1979. Tree Swallows were recorded in 60 blocks, and Bank Swallows from 22 blocks. A few canoe trips along major rivers would increase Atlas records for this species. Rough-winged Swallows were reported from 16 blocks. Confirmed on Fishbladder and Savage Islands (Jok), Cambridge (ALG, DPK), Shelburne (BDF), Montpelier and Plainfield (MFH), Chittenden (RWP) and Londonderry (WJN). This species has occurred in every region of the state during the Atlas Project. Barn Swallows were reported from 59 blocks. An albino Barn Swallow was seen in Tipton on July 12 (PB). Observers located Cliff Swallows in 39 areas. Purple Martins, although limited to the Lake Plains Region and the Lake Memphremagog area, were in average numbers.

#### JAYS THROUGH CREEPER

There were no reports of Gray Jays from the Northeast Kingdom this year. It has been recorded in 5 blocks and confirmed in one block in this region. Blue Jays were reported to be in usual numbers. There were 62 nesting reports in 1979. The Common Raven was recorded in 26 blocks, confirmed in the Barre Quad. (MFH) and in Londonderry (WJN). Present in normal numbers the Common Crow was reported from 60 blocks. Black-capped Chickadees, a common species, were recorded in 60 Atlas blocks. There were no reports of Boreal Chickadee for this period. This editor believes the above and other Northeast Kingdom species went unnoticed this season due to the rare and sometimes absent Northeast Kingdom birder. There were also no new confirmations of Tufted Titmouse, although a pair was observed canvassing maples on July 24 in Sudbury (FVT). What became of the 65 individuals recorded on 78/79 Christmas Counts and later yet the 92 reported in the Cardinal, Mockingbird, Tufted Titmouse census in February? White-breasted Nuthatch and Red-breasted Nuthatch occurred in normal numbers in appropriate habitat. Observers recorded both species in over 31 blocks. The Brown Creeper was not far behind with 27 reports from Atlasers for the period.

#### WRENS

The House Wren is fairly common except perhaps in the Northeast Highland and North Central Regions where there are only scattered Atlas reports. The Winter Wren was reported from 38 blocks, without further comments. It is assumed to be in normal numbers in proper habitat. Not surprisingly, the summer to follow the cold and snowy winter of 78/79 stands without any reports of Carolina Wrens in Vermont. Long-billed Marsh Wrens were in good numbers in the state's limited marsh habitat. The only report of the rare and elusive Short-billed Marsh Wren was from Winhall where a singing male was observed on June 2 (WJN).

#### MIMIDS

The Mockingbird continues to be regularly reported from Lake Plains and Western Foothills Regions and in the Connecticut River Valley in the Eastern Foothills. Extreme northern records for this season included a Probable pair in Morrisville on June 5 (FO), an individual seen June 10 in Johnson (VBC) and one individual seen in East Berkshire, about 5½ miles south of the Canadian border (ALG, DPK). The other two mimids were in usual numbers. Gray Catbird was reported from 54 Atlas blocks and Brown Thrasher from 38 Atlas blocks.

#### THRUSHES

The American Robin, probably one of the most abundant nesting species,

was reported from 66 blocks and has been found in 91% of the Atlas blocks. The Wood Thrush is also common and widespread. This species was reported from 55 blocks for the season. Reported as "scarce and declining" by a Winhall observer the Hermit Thrush seemed to be in fair numbers in other parts of the state. They were recorded in 38 blocks. Swainson's Thrush was found in 18 blocks and assumed at normal levels in appropriate habitat, without comments to the contrary. Gray-cheeked Thrush, nesting in the higher elevations of about 3,000 feet or more, were located in 5 blocks. Individual sightings were reported June 6, 18 and 25 from the Winhall area (WJN). Field observers reported 57 nesting records of the Veery from around the state. Numbers were average. In addition to Atlasers' observations, VINS began a yearly survey of the Eastern Bluebirds through its members and newspaper articles. Sixty-six records of nesters or attempted nesting were received. Valuable nesting-date information was obtained indicating the majority of first broods had fledged the second and third weeks of June and successful second broods had fledged around the second and third weeks in August.

#### GNATCATCHERS THROUGH SHRIKES

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher continues to be more prevalent than it was thought to be three years ago. A pair was observed on the nest at Rockingham on June 1 (DC). Individuals were reported at Brattleboro (DWW), Winhall (P. Castle fide WJN) and Dorset (WGE et al.). Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported as a scarce breeder in Winhall (WJN). Field observers noted them in 21 Atlas blocks. Once listed as an uncertain nester in "Birds of Vermont," it now has been recorded in 54 priority blocks. The more habitat-restricted Ruby-crowned Kinglet was found in 5 Atlas blocks; one Atlaser reported the species thinly distributed in the appropriate habitat but at normal levels (WGE). Distribution of Cedar Waxwing is widespread occurring in 86% of the Atlas blocks. Sixty-four nesting records were reported for the period. There were no reports of the Loggerhead Shrike, a rare local nester of the Lake Champlain area, for this period.

#### VIREOS AND WARBLERS

Thought to be uncommon in the northern sections of the state Yellow-throated Vireos were observed with food for young in Bakersfield and Richford the first week of July (ALG, DPK) and a single bird in Lowell (WGE). Atlas records thus far are concentrated in the mid-central part of the state with scattered reports from all other regions except the Northern Highlands. Field observers reported Solitary Vireo in average numbers in appropriate habitat. Reported from 49 blocks this species was found in all regions except Lake Plains. Red-eyed Vireo is the most common and the most abundant vireo. Recorded in 52 blocks for this period, this species has now been found in 88% of the blocks. After two years Atlasers confirmed PHILADELPHIA VIREOS. On June 28 a pair was observed feeding 2 nearly fledged young perched on a low bush at Ferdinand. On July 13, at an elevation of 1,400 feet, pre-recorded tapes aided in locating 5 pairs, two carrying food for young, and 3 individuals, along a mile and a half of an old road through selectively logged, open canopy, hardwood forests (DPK, ALG). The Niagara-Champlain Region editor for American Birds suggests that the abundance of the species within this stretch of road may be indicative of its abundance over a major portion of northern Vermont and adjacent states where similar habitat exists. In Vermont this species has been recorded in the North Central and North Highlands Regions with scattered reports extending to the south in the Green Mountains Regions. The Warbling Vireo was observed in 31 blocks and has been found in 50% of the Atlas blocks. Black-and-white Warblers appeared to be in average numbers for the summer of 1979. Field workers reported this species from 54 blocks increasing its occurrence in the statewide priority blocks to 73%. An uncommon and local breeder in Vermont, the Golden-winged Warbler has been recorded in 10 Atlas blocks including a possible nesting record from West Rutland (LHT) in 1979. Thus far the species has appeared in 5 blocks in the lower half of the Lake Plains, 3 in the Western Foothills and 2 in the Eastern Foothills regions. The Blue-winged Warbler appears as uncommon and local as the above species, but the reports are spread more widely around the state. The 9 records for the Atlas Project thus break down as follows: 2 confirmed nesting records in the Western Foothills, 1 confirmed in the Lake Plains, 2 confirmed and 1 possible (Brattleboro, 1979, DW) in the Eastern Foothills and 1 possible from the North Central Region (near Lake Memphremagog). There were no reports of Tennessee Warblers this summer except for a late migrant seen in Winhall on June 3 (WJN). Thus far in the Project this species has been recorded in Atlas blocks in the North Central and Northeast Highlands regions as expected. Found in average numbers in the proper habitat, the Nashville Warbler was reported from 29 Atlas blocks during the summer of 1979. The species has now been recorded in 47% of the Atlas blocks. There were the usual scattered reports of the Northern Parula from around the northern and mountainous areas of the state. Atlasers reported possible nesting records from Newport (FO), Johnson (MCH, LNM), Plainfield (MFH), Thetford (WHT), Rochester (WGE), Wallingford Pond (JYC), Lake Ninevah (SBL), Saxtons River (DC); probable nesting from Haden Hill/Orange (BBU, RBU) and confirmed nesting from Orange/Barre (JSW). The species has been reported from 43 priority blocks and 15 non-priority blocks. The Yellow Warbler, although Blue-listed in American Birds, appears to be in good numbers. Mr. William J. Morse of Londonderry reported it as a wide-spread breeder common at low elevations, with an average of 30 found in any one day. Reported from 55 blocks this year the Yellow Warbler has been recorded in 78% of the priority blocks during the Project. Except in the Lake Champlain Valley where the Magnolia Warbler occurs in limited numbers this species was reported from 32 Atlas blocks for all regions. There were no reports of the Cape May Warbler from their normal range, with the absence of Vermont's worldly, Northeast Kingdom resident birder, for this period. Black-throated Blue Warblers were in average numbers in proper habitat. Reports were received from 47 Atlas blocks. As above, Yellow-rumped Warblers appeared to be in normal numbers in appropriate habitat with field observers reporting it from 53 blocks for the period. Atlasers located the Black-throated Green Warbler in 45 blocks, increasing Atlas records to 113 of the 179 priority blocks. Blackburnian Warblers were located in 48 blocks and now recorded in 55% of the Atlas blocks. Chestnut-sided Warblers, one of the more easily located species for Atlas workers, were reported from 61 Atlas blocks from around the state. There were no reports of the, apparently, rare summer nester, the Bay-breasted Warbler which has only been recorded as a probable nester in one Atlas block during the first three years of the Atlas Project. Blackpoll Warblers were reported from 16 blocks. Atlas work indicates breeding distribution primarily occurs the length of the state in the Green Mountains and in the North Central and North Highlands Region. A report of a singing male Pine Warbler in Brattleboro (DWW) and an adult with food for young in Essex Center block (HLV), increased Atlas occurrence to 16 blocks, scattered primarily in the Lake Plains and Eastern Foothills Region but also a few records in the North Central and North Highlands Region. Prairie Warbler which was virtually unknown in Vermont summers before 1976 continues to be reported in Saxtons River where 3 males were singing on June 3 (WJN). A single singing male in Woodstock (ALG et al.) and one in Brownsville (SJS),

SUMMER 1979 CONTRIBUTORS

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 PB Phillip Ballou  
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 VB Virginia Barlow  
 DoB Doris Barrabee  
 AEB Arlyne Barton  
 WB Wayne Bell  
 NB Nancy Biggs  
 LBI Lillian Birkett  
 DLB Don Blades  
 LBo Lynne Bobb  
 HTB Tom Bourne  
 HBo Hollie Bowen  
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 MC Mary Carse  
 JEC John Carter  
 CSC Nini Chapin  
 DC Don Clark  
 KCo Kim Coates  
 WLC Wendell Coleman  
 JYC Jay Copeland  
 ECr Ted Cronin  
 GID Mr. & Mrs. George Davis  
 HBD Helen Davis  
 NdeG Nancy deGross  
 AJD Albert Dupell  
 HMD Millie Dupell  
 JID John Dye  
 MGD Margaret Dye  
 CSE Connie Earle  
 BSE Barbara Eastman  
 HVE Hidge Eastman  
 ORE Oliver Eastman  
 EHE Evan Ellerson  
 EE Eleanor Ellis  
 GFE George Ellison  
 WGE Walter Ellison  
 TJE Thomas Estill  
 BDF Brian Farrell  
 DFI Doug Flack  
 KAF Kris Fister  
 JCF Charles Fox  
 CSG Carol Galano  
 BJB Betty Gatewood  
 MWG Mark Gatewood  
 HGO Myra Goodman  
 ALG Annette Gosnell  
 RG Mrs. Roy Griffin  
 GG Gordon Gurney  
 BPG Bea Guyett  
 EH Ed Hack  
 JHA Jo Halkara  
 CHH Clifford Harris  
 JH Jeff Harvey  
 HPAS High Peaks Audubon Society  
 BMH Beryl Hinton  
 JEH John Hinton  
 CFH Mrs. C. F. Holland  
 MCH Mary Holland  
 PTH Peter Hope  
 MKH Mimi House  
 FCH Fran Howe  
 MHO Murrice Howe  
 EJH Ed Hughes  
 EJ Eric Jaquith  
 RJ Bob Jervis  
 GWJ Gordon Johnson  
 JoJ Joan Johnson  
 NBJ Norma Johnson  
 PJK Phyllis Kehley  
 FK Frank Ketchan

CDK Chris Kibbe  
 DJK Debra Kibbe  
 DPK Doug Kibbe  
 JoK Jo Kixmiller  
 RWK Richard Kixmiller  
 RSK Ruth Kosche  
 CHL Charlotte Lane  
 JDL David Laughlin  
 SBL Sally Laughlin  
 GTL George LeBoutillier  
 TL Ted Levin  
 MMA Micky Marcus  
 ROH Mrs. R. O. Martel  
 JPM Janet Martin  
 NLM Nancy Martin  
 MRM Mary Mashak  
 MJM Mike Maurer  
 SAM Sandy Maurer  
 LNM Larry Metcalf  
 MFM Marion Metcalf  
 GHM George Montgomery  
 AHO Al Morrison  
 LPM Louise Mullen  
 WDN Whit Nichols  
 JMN Julie Nicholson  
 HN Heidi Nikolaidis  
 JMI Jim Nissen  
 RNI Ruth Nissen  
 WJN William Norse  
 FO Frank Oatman  
 EO Elizabeth Ohly  
 AIP Alma Parent  
 EHP E. H. Pease  
 JCP Mrs. Julian Pease  
 JWP John Peavey  
 MAP May Peavey  
 MCP Mary Perrin  
 KPe Kathleen Petty  
 RWP Roy Pilcher  
 AP Alan Pistorius  
 LHP Henry Potter  
 CRP Carol Powell  
 CSP Craig Provost  
 LPr Larry Prussin  
 REP Bunn Putnam  
 HSP Hugh Putnam  
 HR Herman Redden  
 DGR Dan Reid  
 LSR Lillian Reid  
 MFR Mary Rising  
 BLR Betty Rist  
 SJS Jean Sangdahl  
 CSZ Chris Schultz  
 WS Wayne Scott  
 RS Richard Sheldon  
 KSh Kit Shelton  
 DSH Doug Sherry  
 AIS Alice Simpson  
 FS Fred Simpson  
 NS Nancy Simson  
 AFS Nancy Spencer  
 EdS Edith Stewart  
 JDS Jim Stewart  
 RuS Ruth Stewart  
 WHT Bill Tewell  
 HT Helene Toolan  
 LHT Leo Trepanier  
 FWT Pete Tully  
 PDU Peter Upton  
 VBC Vermont Bird Conference Field Trip  
 VINS Vermont Institute of Natural Science Atlas Workers  
 D. Watson  
 BCW Betty Weeks  
 TW Tom Wessels  
 BW Mrs. Brenden Whittaker  
 MLW Martha Williamson  
 DWV Doug Wilson  
 AW Ann Winchester  
 HGW Howard Wood  
 HLY Marilyn Yost  
 CY Connie Youngstrom  
 BMZ Blanche Zauchinger

present throughout the summer, represent two new locations for this species. All 9 Atlas blocks this species has been located in occur in the Eastern Foothills Region. Ovenbirds were reported in good numbers from 58 blocks, statewide. This species has been recorded in 78% of the Atlas blocks. The Northern Waterthrush was located in 24 blocks statewide and reported in average numbers. A Louisiana Waterthrush nested in the Babcock Nature Preserve again in 1979 (FO). This location is the most northerly record of this species yet. More common than originally thought, the Mourning Warbler seems to occur regularly in appropriate habitat. Field observers reported it from 30 blocks scattered throughout all but the Lake Plains Region. In Brattleboro one observer reported numbers seemed up in his area (WON). The Common Yellowthroat was reported from 62 blocks, enjoying widespread distribution and abundance. An unusual record for the summer season was a Yellow-breasted Chat, present at Winhall Hollow on June 17 (WJN). The only summer report of Wilson's Warbler was an apparently late migrant at West Rutland Marsh June 1st (WJN). Canada Warbler appeared to be in normal numbers. Field workers located it in 41 blocks. Redstarts were also in good numbers and readily recorded in 65 blocks statewide.

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES AND TANAGERS

Bobolinks appeared to fare well despite Vermont's haying seasons. They were recorded in 41 blocks statewide, occurring in 75% of the 179 Atlas blocks at the end of the 1979 season. In contrast, Eastern Meadowlarks were reported from half as many blocks as the above. In accordance with this, Eastern Meadowlarks were reported scarce and declining at higher elevations in the Winhall, Londonderry area (WJN). Red-winged Blackbirds, reported from 55 blocks for the period, have been recorded in every block that has received coverage. Another visible bird, therefore readily located nesting, is the Northern Oriole. Recorded in 50 blocks this season, 1979, it occurs in 80% of the Atlas blocks. The only northern report of Rusty Blackbird was a possible nesting record from Maidstone State Park (EHE). In the southern Mountains Regions observers fared better, locating this species in Thetford, Wallingford, Woodford (WGE et al.), Springfield (JWP, MAP) and Brattleboro blocks (DWM). Breeding was confirmed in Londonderry (WJN), Sunderland (ALG et al.) and Somerset Reservoir blocks (LHM). The Common Grackle and the Brown-headed Cowbird were both reported in average numbers around the state. Also well reported, the Scarlet Tanager was found in 68 blocks statewide.

FINCHES

The Cardinal appears to be continuing northward. Established in the Western and Eastern Foothills Regions and the Lake Plains Region, seven scattered records were reported from the northern regions, including possible nesting in Wells (VINS) and at Maidstone State Park (EHE). In normal numbers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were recorded from 60 blocks, occurring in 85% of the Atlas sample blocks. Indigo Buntings appear in all regions in the appropriate habitat. Atlas workers located it in 39 blocks. The Atlas Project turned up nine blocks with Evening Grosbeak present this summer, confirming nesting at Mt. Carmel (WGE et al.), Woodstock (MLW) and Podunk (HMD). Purple Finch is a common nester in Vermont except in the Lake Plains Region where the Atlas information indicates it occurs limitedly. Atlas workers reported this species from 53 blocks in 1979. House Finch populations continue to grow and spread. In Bennington where this species first nested in 1976, 23 House Finches regularly visited a feeder this year (HT). They were recorded north to Burlington in western Vermont and to Springfield in eastern Vermont. Individuals were reported at Underhill, the most northerly record yet (K. Shelton), and Woodstock (fide ALG) for this period. Scattered records of nesting Pine Siskins have occurred in the mountains, North Central and North Highlands Regions in previous years. In 1979 there was one report of 6 birds at Plainfield on June 5 (MFM). American Goldfinch were reported from 61 blocks and appeared in good numbers. A late nester this common species has only been confirmed in 30% of the Atlas blocks. Although Atlasers reported Crossbills for this period, neither species has been confirmed nesting in Vermont yet, at any time of the year. Five Red Crossbills were observed at Winhall June 26 (WJN) and 4 were sighted at Marshfield on June 30 (MFM). Seven White-winged Crossbills were reported from West Mountain Pond and 4 at Ferdinand the end of June (LHM). On June 30 four were reported at Marshfield (MFM), 2 at Sunderland July 7, one at Wallingford Pond July 19 (WGE, NLM) and 8-9 at Island Pond on July 29. Present in winter months too, one speculates where, when, and if Crossbills nest, what are the optimum conditions for these species. A regular nester in the appropriate habitat, the Rufous-sided Towhee was reported from 24 blocks and has been recorded in 47% of the Atlas blocks.

SPARROWS

The Savannah Sparrow was reported from 25 blocks for the period and appears to be more numerous in the northern two-thirds of the state. There were no reports of Grasshopper Sparrows for this period. The Vesper Sparrow, listed as a limited nester of open fields in Spear's Birds of Vermont, has accordingly been located in all regions except the Mountains Regions during the Atlas Project. For this period a singing male was present at Springfield (JWP, MAP) and one was seen in Middlesex July 8 (WJN). Dark-eyed Juncos were reported from 48 blocks and were said to be in good numbers. Chipping Sparrows were also in good numbers. Reported from 55 blocks, they now have been recorded in 81% of the Atlas blocks. Field Sparrows were present in average numbers in proper habitat. This species was reported from 21 Atlas blocks. One of Vermont's most common sparrows, the White-throated Sparrow was reported from 64 blocks statewide. Thought to be a Northeast Kingdom nester, the Lincoln's Sparrow was located down the Green Mountains as far south as Woodford, about 11 miles, as the crow flies, from the Massachusetts border. Here 4 singing males were located on June 15 (WGE, JyC). In the Sunderland-Branch Pond block 7 individuals were located, mostly at the edges of Beaver ponds but a few were found maintaining territory at the edge of meadows growing in old clear-cut areas (WGE, ALQ, JyC). The Swamp Sparrow, limited in Vermont by habitat, was reported from 21 blocks and occurs in 42% of the Atlas blocks thus far. Song Sparrow, recorded in 61 blocks in 1979, has occurred in 89% of the Atlas blocks.

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Contributors are reminded to send in rare and unusual bird sightings at once (or to call the Vermont Bird Alert) and to submit seasonal summaries 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, Vt. 05091. Or, call us at 457-2779.

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