



# Records of Vermont Birds

Volume 11, Number 4, Fall 1983

## FALL MIGRATION 1983

1 AUGUST-30 NOVEMBER

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The autumn of 1983 was warm, cold, dry, and wet, and in short, evidenced all of the interest and caprice of New England weather. With such diverse weather it is only appropriate that the birds of the season presented a diverse pattern of occurrence as well. There was a good, though not excellent, passerine migration; waders (shorebirds) were few in number but diverse; the September Broad-winged Hawk Flight was poor (most Vermont Hawk Watchers were not able to be atop their lookouts on 9/13 when the major Broad-wing flight took place); and winter eruptive species were not noticeably eruptive during the season.

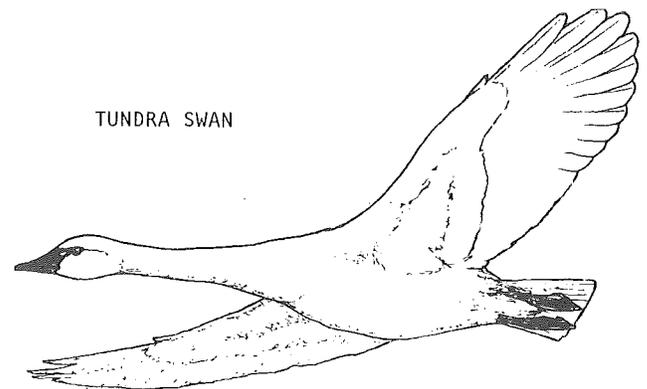
August was warm, with the average temperature at Burlington 68.6°, 1.5° warmer than average. Some highs of 90°+ were recorded in southern Vermont, including 95° at Brattleboro on the 8th. The month was also wet for much of the state; for example Chittenden received 9.8" of rain. In contrast, September consisted of mostly warm bluebird weather. September 1983 was the warmest at Burlington since 1971. Canadian high pressure occurred from 9/12-15 with frost touching the central uplands on the 15th. Frost was not recorded over much of the state until 10/9-11, and did not occur in the southern Connecticut River Valley until 10/20. The only major rainfall of the month occurred 9/21-22 when Burlington received 3.26" (86% of the city's rainfall during September). The dry September weather improved a poor wader flight during October.

October began with a warm spell with some places recording temperatures into the 80's. A cold front 10/4-5 cooled the weather sharply. High pressure brought overnight frost to most of Vermont on 10/9-11. Overall the month was average with respect to temperature, and precipitation was above average. The major storm of the month in northern Vermont was the cold front of 10/4-5, and in southern Vermont the most rain occurred on 10/12-14. November 1983 was the wettest on average for Vermont in at least 50 years. Some very good waterbird fallouts accompanied some of the storms of November. Periods of precipitation included 11/3-7, 11/10-13, 11/16-18 (the first significant snowfall), 11/21, 11/24-26 (more snow), and 11/28-29. Temperatures were very cold 11/13-14 including a frigid reading of 2°F at Canaan.

It is somewhat risky attempting to relate pattern in bird records to pattern in the weather. This is caused by a weekend bias in birder activity; 56% of high counts for 143 species of bird this autumn took place on weekends and holidays. Nonetheless, some flights may be linked to weather fairly comfortably. The large Broad-winged Hawk flight of 9/13 and good numbers of passerines 9/12-15 are related to the only major period of Canadian high pressure during September. A good flight involving geese, passerines and waders 10/9-11 was also correlated with high pressure. It would appear that good hawk, goose and crow flights on 10/16 may have been caused by the damming effect of the storm of 10/12-14. Also, some waterbird fallouts can be associated with inclement weather; as the Oldsquaw which occurred in large numbers on 11/5.

Perhaps because of the early mildness of the season, insectivores lingered later than average. This seemed especially true of warblers, 19 species of which were recorded during October. If one examines the departure dates of warblers against the vegetational strata in which each species forages, one finds that arboreal species departed on time and that the major contributors to the perceived lateness of warblers were species which forage in shrubs or near the ground. This seems to indicate late flowering of asters and goldenrods, and a higher availability of insects in shrubs.

The season was not without the excitement of rarities. The outstanding bird of the season was a NORTHERN WHEATEAR at Cornwall 9/11-17, the second record of this essentially palearctic thrush for Vermont. The other premier birds of the autumn include TRICOLORED HERON (2nd state record), TUNDRA SWAN, PURPLE SANDPIPER, and BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (perhaps a first for the upper Connecticut River Valley). Other nice finds include Golden Eagle, Red Knot, Stilt Sandpiper, and Sedge Wren. Overall, 232 species were recorded, which is a bit above the 9 year average for fall.



TUNDRA SWAN

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MARTIN

### MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE:

As regular readers of these Records know, reports of rare or unusual species are referred to the Vermont Bird Records Committee, which attempts to weigh such reports and be sure all necessary data is provided to assure the validity of reports which they accept, and to withstand the scrutiny of future generations. The Committee takes its responsibility seriously, and as an independent scientific body (for example, they have rejected a report submitted by your Managing Editor!). Although the following records did not meet the necessary criteria for acceptance by the Committee, I believe they should be recorded in these pages:

White-eyed Vireo

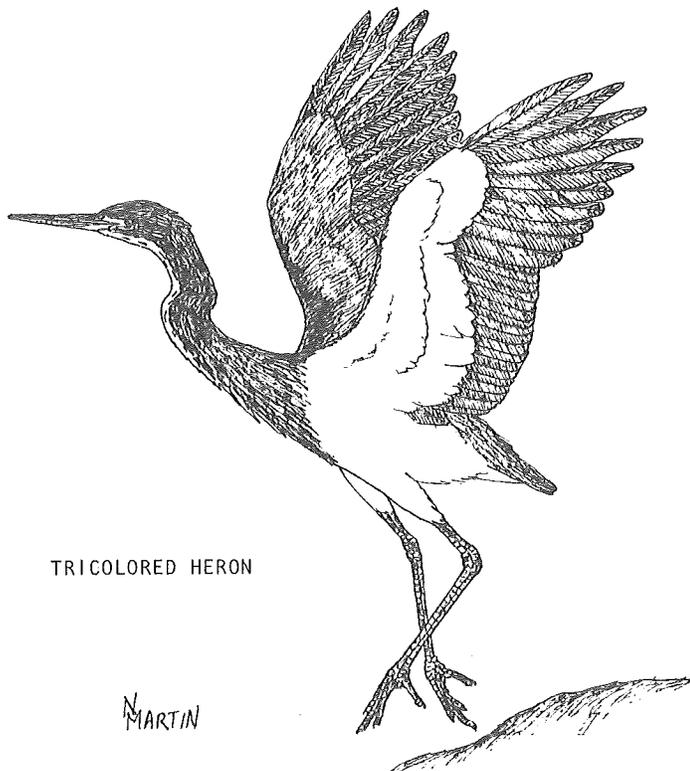
September 12, 1983 - Mt. Philo, John and Margaret Dye

Hooded Warbler

September 14-23, 1983 - Shaftsbury, Ruth and Eugene Kosche, apparently an imm. female.

## LOONS THROUGH HERONS

There were two reports of the rare Red-throated Loon: 1 on Miller's Pd. in Arlington on 9/5 was both exceptionally early and exceptionally rare for Bennington County (RSK,ERK); 2 on Lake Champlain in Addison on 11/19 were more expected (WGE). About 157 Common Loons were reported: high counts included 66 on 10/28 and 29 at Grand Isle (RBL), and 28 on 11/20 in St. Albans and Swanton with 24 near Butler I. (MJM, WRB). Pied-billed Grebes were reported in good numbers from 8/15 to 11/13: biologists at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge (MNWR hereafter) counted 10 on 10/1 (TM,JNi); the last was reported from Timmouth Pd. (CJF). Over 300 Horned Grebes were reported mostly from late November with 290 on 11/19 and 20; high counts were 123 at Button Bay S.P. on 11/20 (DLC), and 79 at the Tri-Town Treatment Plant in Addison on 11/19 (WGE). The species was reported as early as 10/22. Reports of Red-necked Grebes are as follows: 3 on Lake Morey on 10/16 (CCF), 2 on Lake Memphremagog on 11/11 (DLC,RNS,DD), 1 at Burlington on 11/12 (WGE), 3 at Burlington on 11/19 (DLC), 6 from Burlington to Addison on 11/20 (DLC), and 1 at Herrick's Cove (HC hereafter) on 11/21 (WJN). Over 100 Double-crested Cormorants were reported from 8/11 to 11/22; the high of 40 was reported from Fuller Mt. in Ferrisburg on 10/16 (JID,MCD); the last was at Lake Carmi (PJM). The usual handful of American Bitterns were reported: the high count was an excellent 12 on 10/1 at MNWR (TM,JNi); the last reported was 1 at the Winooski River Delta (WRD hereafter) in Colchester on 10/10 (WGE,NLM). There was a single report of Least Bittern, 1 was noted at West Rutland Marsh on 8/19 (WJN). High counts of Great Blue Heron included 29 on 8/7 at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area (DCWMA hereafter) (WGE,NLM), and 150 on 10/1 at MNWR (TM,JNi). The last reported was 1 at Clarendon on 11/26 (CJF). There were two reports of Great Egret: 1 was at MNWR on 8/22 (JNi), and 1 was seen at Kellogg's Bay in Ferrisburg on 9/3 (JID,MCD). Vermont got a share of the first TRICOLORED HERON for Essex County, New York as the bird in question was first seen standing on the Vermont shore of the Crown Pt. Bridge on 8/15, providing only the second record for Records of Vermont Birds (RVB hereafter) (GC,RKH). There were two reports of



TRICOLORED HERON

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Cattle Egret; 2 were seen crossing the Canadian border at Highgate on 8/11 (RJG), and 2 were at Kellogg's Bay with the Great Egret on 9/3 (JID,MCD). The Green-backed Heron was well represented this autumn; highs include 5 on 9/5 DCWMA (WGE,NLM,JPM,VX), and 5 on 10/1 at MNWR (TM,JNi); the last was at Lake Carmi in Franklin on 10/12 (PJM). Over half of the Black-crowned Night-Herons reported were from DCWMA and MNWR; high counts were 13 on 8/7 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and 30 at MNWR on 10/1 (TM,JNi). Noteworthy was 1 at Brattleboro from 8/10 to 13 (JJC), and the last reported was at East Creek in Orwell on 10/3 (ELW).

## WATERFOWL

There was a single report of the very rare TUNDRA SWAN, 11 were seen flying over Paine Mt. in Northfield on 10/6 (WHB, et al.). The peak Snow Goose flight occurred on earlier than normal dates: the earliest were 25 at Winhall on 10/6 (WJN), and 1 over Paine Mt. on 10/6 (WHB). Three hundred sixty-eight were reported between 10/6 and 10/10 (or 18% of the grand total). The high of 400 was reported from Ferrisburg on 11/3 (JRA). 'Blue' geese included 2 over Snake Mt. on 10/10 (SRA), and 4 over the Winhall Hawk Lookout (WHL hereafter) on 10/9 (WJN). The first obviously migratory Canada Geese were 4 over Lincoln Hill in Starksboro on 9/25 (WRB), and 50 at Middlebury on 9/26 (JDM). Over 16,000 were reported, more than half of which were seen between 10/6 and 10/10, with 4431 on 10/9; high counts were from this period and included, 2860 at Shoreham on 10/8 (ELW), and 2248 at WRD on 10/9 (JDM). There was also a smaller peak on 10/16. Reports of ducks from MNWR are on an entirely different level than those from other areas and therefore will be mentioned first in all duck accounts. The peak count of Wood Ducks from MNWR was 1000 on 10/1 (JNi, TM). The average Oct. count there was 515, these numbers tailed off to an average of 65 during Nov. Other high counts were, 30-40 at Mud Creek in Alburg on 9/10 (CCF), and 50+ on the South Slang in Ferrisburg on 9/29 (JID,MCD). Green-winged Teal averaged 215 individuals at MNWR during Oct. with a high of 250 on 10/18. The Nov. average count was a more modest 100 (JNi, TM). Among other observers, the high count was 27 at Sand Bar WMA on 10/29 (JDM). The peak count of American Black Duck at MNWR was 3060 on 10/1, and the average count during Oct. was 2700 (TM,JNi). Over 600 others were reported with a high of 75 at Thurman W. Dix Res. in Orange on 9/26 (MFM). The Mallard peaked at MNWR in early Oct. with 5440 on 10/1; the average Oct. count was 4960 (JNi, TM); 700 others were reported with a max. of 150 at DCWMA on 8/11 (KHD). Birders reported a mallard to black duck ratio of 1.2:1.0 and biologists at MNWR reported 1.8:1.0. High counts of the Northern Pintail at MNWR were 100 on 10/18 and 11/1; the average count for Oct. was 85 and for Nov. 35 (JNi, TM); just 12 others were reported from 9/4 to 11/8. The Blue-winged Teal averaged 80 during Oct. at MNWR with a peak of 225 on 10/1 (JNi, TM); over 200 others were reported with a high count of 60 on 9/18 at East Creek, Orwell (ELW). At MNWR the average count of Northern Shoveler during Oct. was 35, this tailed to 10 during Nov.; the max. was 50 from 10/31 to 11/1 (JNi, TM). Also 2 imm. males were seen on the Burlington waterfront from 11/12 into Dec. (m.ob.). Counts of Gadwall at MNWR averaged 135 during Oct. and 140 during Nov., with the best count there 275 on 11/9 (JNi, TM). The species was seen throughout the autumn in Burlington where 8 half grown young were seen on 8/7 (first reported in July) and the max. was 12 on 11/13 (m.ob.). Others were: 2 at DCWMA on 8/11 (KHD), 2 at Lake Carmi on 9/4 (PJM), 1 at WRD on 10/10 (WGE, NLM), 2 at Shoreham on 10/11 (ELW), and 2 at Spring weather Nature Area on 10/21 (WJN). The America Wigeon peak at MNWR was 1000 on 10/18, the average

count there in Oct. was 625 and tailed off to 100 during Nov. (JNi, TM); the only others reported were 1 on the South Slang in Ferrisburg on 9/29 (JID, MCD), and 5 at Button Bay State Park on 10/2 (DLC). There were two reports of Canvasback both from the same area; very impressive were 4400+ at Donaldson Pt. in Swanton on 11/20 (MJM, WRB); 88 were reported from Swanton on 11/26 (CCF). The Ring-necked Duck was by far the most abundant duck at MNWR with an Oct. average of 6145, and a peak of 7685 10/31-11/1 (JNi, TM). Fifty-three others were reported, with a max. of 16 on 10/15 at Stiles Pd., Waterford (WGE). There were just three reports of Greater Scaup: 1 injured drake was seen at Quechee on 10/6 (WGE, NLM), 2 hens were seen on Lake Morey on 10/16 (CCF), and 11 were seen at Pantan on 11/19 (MBN). The average count of Lesser Scaup at MNWR was 5 in both Oct. and Nov. with a max. of 25 on 11/1 (JNi, TM). Others were: 1 on 10/2 at Button Bay State Park (DLC), 4 at Shoreham on 10/27 (ELW), 30 on Lake Memphremagog on 11/11 (DLC, RNS, DCD), 6 at Addison on 11/19 (WGE), and 3 at Shoreham on 11/20 (ELW). Un-identified Scaup included 500+ at Donaldson Pt., Swanton on 11/20 (MJM, WRB), and 10 at the Swanton/Alburg Bridge on 11/26 (CCF). The Oldsquaw was reported in far better than average numbers. Eighty-one were noted from 10/27 (7 on Tirmouth Pd. CJF) to 11/27 (1 at Burlington, DLC, BLR). High counts were 19 at Caspian Lake, Greensboro (DLC, BLR), 16 on Island Pd. (DLC, BLR), and 14 on Lake Morey (CCF), all on 11/5, and 10 on Black Pond, Plymouth on 11/12 (ASP). A total of 127 Black Scoters was reported: earliest were 24 on Tirmouth Pd. (CJF), 35 on Lake Morey and 27 on the Connecticut River at Fairlee (CCF) on 10/16; other high counts were 9 on 10/29 at L. Morey (WGE, NLM), 12 on 11/5 on Island Pd. (DLC, BLR), and 13 on Tirmouth Pd. on 11/12 (CJF). There were four reports of the Surf Scoter: 2 males were located on L. Morey on 10/29 (CCF, WGE, NLM), 1 was seen on L. Morey on 11/5 (CCF), 3 were observed on Island Pd. on 11/5 (DLC, BLR), and 8 were on the Otter Creek in Rutland on 11/6 (RHH, CJF). Eighty-five White-winged Scoters were reported on seven dates from 10/8, when 50 were seen passing overhead at WRD (JDM), to 11/26 when 1 was located at Colchester (CCF); the second highest count of the season was 15 on 11/5 at Caspian Lake (DLC, BLR). The earliest migratory Common Goldeneye were 2 imm. males on Lake Morey on 10/22 (WGE, NLM); high counts included a non-Lake Champlain max. of 36 at L. Morey on 11/19 (CCF), and 250 in Colchester and Burlington on 11/27 (JDM). The earliest Bufflehead were noted in mid-Oct., the max. of 5 at MNWR was for 10/21 (JNi, TM); the seasonal max. was 30 plus at L. Carmi in Franklin on 10/27 (PJM). The daily average for the Hooded Merganser at MNWR varied little, ranging from 43/day in Oct. to 45/day during Nov., the max. there was an impressive 75 on 10/31 and 11/1 (JNi, TM); 100 others were reported with a peak count of 18 on 10/22 at L. Morey (WGE, NLM). The Common Merganser was reported throughout the season. However, large numbers were not seen until Nov. when the species' migration begins to peak; high counts were 150 at Kingsland Bay, Ferrisburg on 11/15 (JID, MCD), and 172 at Shoreham on 11/20 (ELW). There were three reports of Red-breasted Merganser: 3 were found on L. Carmi on 10/26 (PJM), 42 were observed on Lake Memphremagog at South Bay on 11/5 (DLC, BLR), and 1 hen was seen at HC on 11/13 (WGE, NLM). All reports of Ruddy Ducks were from MNWR, the Oct. daily average there was 5, with a max. of 10 on 10/31, and the Nov. daily average was 3 with a max. of 10 on 11/30 (JNi, TM).

-29- carcass in Shoreham on 8/27 (SLM); the last was seen on 10/29 at E. Thetford (WGE, NLM). Numbers of Osprey returned to normal levels for recent years, 94 were seen from Hawk Watch sites (0.18/observer hr.) and 34 others were reported. The highest daily total reported was 17 on 10/6 at Paine Mt., Northfield (WHB, et al); the last was seen at HC on 11/13 (WGE, NLM). There were reports of at least 5 Bald Eagles: an imm. and an ad. were seen at MNWR from 8/3-8/23 (JNi, TM), a third year bird was seen at DCWMA from 8/13 to 8/27 (TAR, MJM, WRB), a fourth year imm. which eventually wintered was observed along the White River in Sharon from 9/7 to 11/11 (TL, JS), and 1 was noted for a short period at MNWR from 10/14 to an unspecified date in Oct. (JNi, TM). Northern Harriers totalled 39 on Hawk Watches. Up to 5 were reported at MNWR in Oct.; the species was seen at DCWMA throughout the season with a maximum of 9 on 8/27 (MJM, WRB); 33 other harriers were reported. As always the Sharp-shinned Hawk was the most common accipiter, 440 were reported from Hawk Watches with a one day max. of 49 on 10/9 at Lincoln Hill, Starksboro (WRB, et al.). About 45 others were reported. Eleven Cooper's Hawks were seen during Hawk Watches, 6 from 9/19 to 10/2. The ratio of sharp-shinned to Cooper's hawks for 1983 was 40 to 1. Fourteen Northern Goshawks were seen by hawk watchers with half between 9/19 and 10/2, which seems early for this species which traditionally peaks during the latter half of October and November. A total of 34 Red-shouldered Hawks was reported by hawk watchers, the one day max. was 15 on 10/16 at Lincoln Hill (MPB). Eleven others were reported including the latest on 11/16 at Sudbury (SLM). Vermonters missed the majority of a very concentrated Broad-winged Hawk flight which occurred almost in its entirety on 13 and 14 Sept. (e.g. ca. 20,000 at Mt. Wachusett, Princeton, MA on 9/13 & ca. 10,000 in NH on 9/14). Just 371 broad-wings were reported on Vermont Hawk Watches with 55% from 9/19 to 10/2; high counts included 85 on 9/13 at Bald Hill, Plainfield (JSW), 35 on 9/12 at Bartonsville (TEJ), 32 on 9/13 at Woodstock (JMN), and 51 on 9/18 at Grafton (DC). Late birds included 1 on 10/31 at Woodstock (CCF), and a very late individual at Winhall on 11/8 (WJN). The Red-tailed Hawk flight was well covered, 335 were reported on Hawk Watches with the majority seen after 1 Oct. This year's flight represents an improvement of better than 50% over last autumn's disappointing tally (0.63/obs. hr. in 1984 vs. 0.24 in 1983). The best count was 69 on 10/16 at Lincoln Hill in Starksboro (MPB), about 200 others were reported. Thirty-one Rough-legged Hawks were reported, none on Hawk Watches. Only three rough-legs were found during Oct., but observations picked up considerably during Nov., the best count being 7 on 11/20 in the St. Albans/Swanton area; an additional 4 were located at North Hero S.P. on the same day (MJM, WRB). The only rough-leg reported away from the Champlain Lowlands this autumn was seen in Rockingham on 11/13 (WGE, NLM). There was a single report of GOLDEN EAGLE, 1 was seen at Deer Leap in Bristol (the same site where three were seen the preceding Nov.) on 10/22 (DLC, KH). Only 65 American Kestrels were noted during hawk watching, a considerable drop from the norm of 200 plus, however the kestrel was reported in good numbers away from Hawk Watches totalling ca. 170 with an impressive max. of 55 on 8/28 at DCWMA (MJM, WRB). Merlins reported included 1 on 9/1 at Winhall (WJN), 1 at Mt. Philo on 9/30 (DLC, RC), 1 at Sudbury on 10/13 (SLM), another at Mt. Philo on 10/14 (JID, MCD), 1 at Tirmouth Channel on 10/25 (CJF), and 1 at Springweather NA on the same date (WJN). Half of the 14 Peregrine Falcons seen are suspected to be birds from hack sites: 4 were seen at the White Rocks hack site on 8/7 (LPS), a bird from the previous year's release was seen at the Marshfield hack site on 8/13 (MJM), a probable ad. female was observed at DCWMA on

WILDS AND FALCONS

Twenty-six Turkey Vultures were seen on Hawk Watches, an additional 157 were reported by observers, and the high count was a notable 52 on a single cattle

8/27 (MJM,WRB), and 1 was noted at Shoreham on 8/30 (ELW). Seven other migrants are as follows: 1 at Paine Mt., Northfield on 9/22 (WHB, et al.), 1 seen and heard 'kakking' at Deer Leap, Bristol on 9/23 (DLC,RNS, et al.), 1 at Lincoln Hill on 9/25 (WRB, et al.), 1 at Woodstock on 10/7 (JMN), a tundra bird at Bellows Falls on 10/7 (SAL), and 1 with a broken wing was recovered at MNWR on 10/25 and sent to Tufts Veterinary School for rehabilitation (TM).

GAMEBIRDS THROUGH RAILS

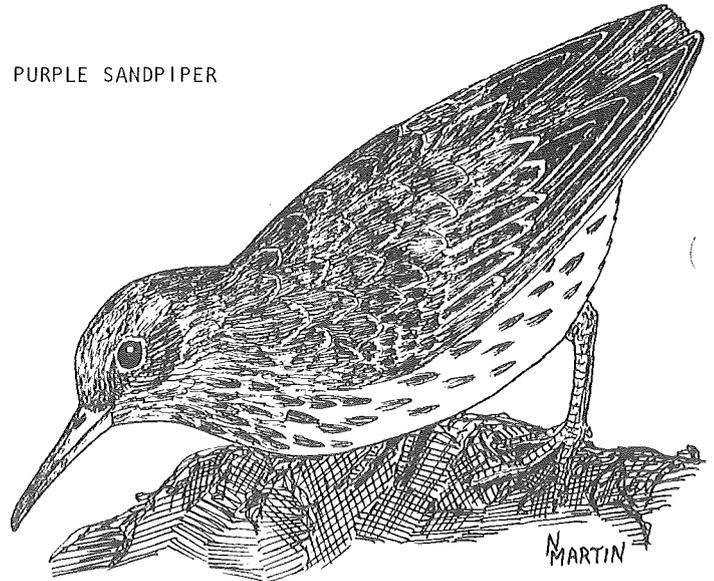
Two Ring-necked Pheasants seen at Timmouth on 10/24 and 11/26 were escapees from the Timmouth Hunting Preserve (CJF). A brood of 7 at Shoreham on 8/16 is the first indication of breeding in many years (ELW), 1 was also seen at Shoreham on 10/26 (ELW). There were two reports of Spruce Grouse from Ferdinand, 1 on 9/5 at Moose Bog (WJN), and 1 on 9/11 (MFM). The Ruffed Grouse was reported by fifteen observers and appears to be in average to above average numbers; individuals were heard drumming on 9/5 at Burlington (JDM), 10/8 and 10/30 at Woodstock (JMN), and 11/1 at Shrewsbury (LPS). There were three reports of Wild Turkey: 4 were located at Orwell on 9/21 (SLM), 10 were seen at Ferrisburg on 10/12 (JID,MCD), and 2 males were noted at Clarendon on 11/24 (CJF). The single location where a stocked Northern Bobwhite was recorded this autumn was Winhall where 1 was found on 10/14 (WJN). The peak count of the Virginia Rail at MNWR during Oct. was 15 on 10/1 (JNi, TM); other reports include 1 each at WRD and Pantton on 8/7 (WGE, NLM), 1 at Weybridge on 8/10 (MBN), and 1 at WRD on 9/25 (WGE,NLM). The Sora was only reported from MNWR where the high count during Oct. was 10 on 10/1 (JNi, TM). The high count of Common Moorhen at MNWR for Oct. was 5 on 10/1 (JNi, TM); other reports were 1 at Whitney Creek, Addison on 8/24 (WJN), three observations from WRD from 9/5 to 9/24 (with 3 on the latter date the best count) (JDM), and 12 observed at East Creek, Orwell on 9/19 (ELW). Numbers of the American Coot peaked at MNWR on 10/1 when 15 were counted (JNi, TM), others were noted at HC on 10/21 (2), and 11/1 (1) (WJN).

WADERS

Over 60 Black-bellied Plovers were reported with the first sighted at WRD on 8/13 (JDM). High counts were 18 on 10/10 at WRD (WGE,NLM), and 10 on 10/18 at MNWR (JNi, TM); the latest reported were 2 on 11/19 at DCWMA, Addison (WGE). There were four reports of Lesser Golden Plover: 1 ad. was seen at WRD on 8/28 (WGE), 1 was noted at the same place on 9/10 (JDM), 1 was found at Burlington on 11/12 (WGE), and the last was sighted at DCWMA on 11/19 (WGE). There were just five reports of Semipalmated Plover: 1 was found at WRD on 8/7 (WGE,NLM), 2 were seen there on 8/21 (JDM), a juvenile was observed at DCWMA on 8/28 (WS), 4 were at WRD on 9/25 (WGE,NLM), and 2 were located there on 10/3 (JDM). Just over 300 Killdeer were reported with the best count 19 on 10/1 at Silver Lake in Barnard (WGE,NLM); last were 2 at Londonderry on 11/17 (JRL). Two downy young were seen with their parents on 8/2 at Woodbury, a new late date for young Killdeer (MFM). The earliest of over 50 Greater Yellowlegs were 2 noted at DCWMA on 8/28 (WS); max. included 11 on 10/9 at WRD (JDM), and 10 on 10/18 at MNWR (JNi, TM); the last were 1 at Butler I., off St. Albans, and 1 (perhaps the same bird) at North Hero SP on 11/20 (MJM, WRB). Numbers of the Lesser Yellowlegs were half those of its larger relative; the best count was 10 on 8/38 at DCWMA (WS), and the latest was reported from Thurman W. Dix Res. on 10/30 (MFM). A miniscule 12 Solitary Sandpipers were reported, the latest was observed at Woodstock on 10/14 (JMN). Most of the 58

Spotted Sandpipers reported were seen early in the season, however, 15 were still present at MNWR on 10/15 (JNi, TM); the last were 1 at Bartonville on 10/22 (TEJ), and 1 at Lake Morey from 10/22-23 (WGE, NLM). Only 4 Upland Sandpipers were reported, the latest was out of place and far later than normal on 9/23 at the WHL (WJN). A lone Red Knot was observed on 9/14 at the Charlotte Town Beach (SRA). Just 16 Sanderling were reported; earliest was 1 on 9/3 at Shelburne (JDM), the best count was 5 on 9/25 at Burlington (WGE,NLM), and the last were 2 at WRD on 10/16 (JDM). The 18 Semipalmated Sandpipers reported represents one of the lowest totals in years; no more than three were seen on any date. One at Little Averill Pd. on 8/27 was unexpected (WGE,NLM, et al.); the last were 2 juveniles at Burlington on 9/25 (WGE,NLM). The Least Sandpiper was also recorded in very low numbers with just 35 reported; high counts were 7 on 8/7 DCWMA (WGE, NLM), and 7-8 at DCWMA on 8/28 (WS); the latest was observed at Burlington on 10/3 (JDM). There were two reports of the uncommon White-rumped Sandpiper: 2 were seen at Springweather NA in Springfield on 9/14, well beyond the usual geographic limit of Vermont reports (WJN), and 5 were located at Burlington on 11/5 (JDM). The only Baird's Sandpiper was seen at Burlington on 8/24 (WJN). Seven Pectoral Sandpipers were reported from 10/1 through 11/19 when the last was seen at DCWMA (WGE). After going unreported for 8 years in the Autumn RVB the PURPLE SANDPIPER has been observed during two consecutive falls. There were two

PURPLE SANDPIPER

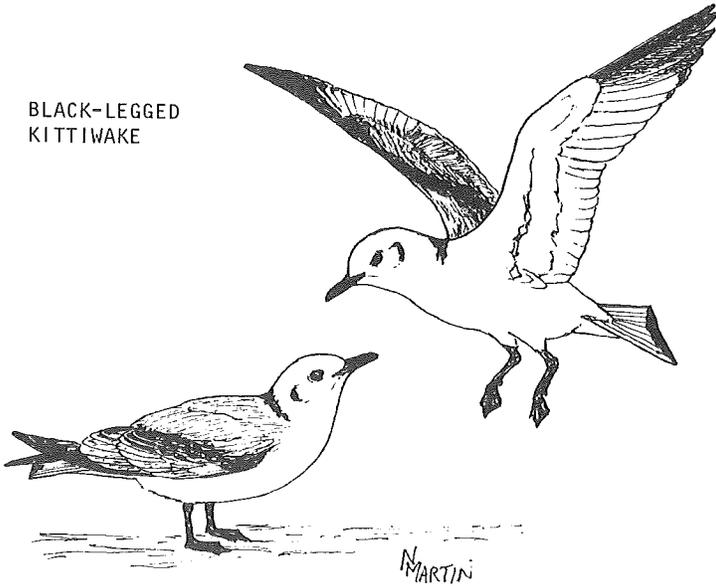


reports; 1 was at the Charlotte Town Beach on 11/6 (SRA), and 2 were observed at Blodgett's Beach in Burlington on 11/11 (SRA et al.). Among the more noteworthy of 8 Dunlin reports was the early date of 10/3 at Blodgett's in Burlington (JDM), high counts of 29 on 10/9 to 10 at WRD (JDM,WGE,NLM), and 7 on 11/5 at Blodgett's (JDM). Locations reporting the species for the first time were Shoreham, 2 on 10/10 (ELW), and Springweather NA in Springfield on 10/7 (WJN); the last was seen at DCWMA on 11/19 (WGE). An individual of the very rare STILT SANDPIPER was located in Addison on 8/28 in a small pond along Rte. 22A (WS). The rare Long-billed Dowitcher was reported twice from MNWR where 1 was seen on 8/31 at Long Marsh Bay and 20 were noted on 10/6 (JNi, TM). In addition, an unidentified Dowitcher was seen at WRD on 10/9 (JDM). At MNWR the best Common Snipe count was an impressive 100 on 10/15 (JNi, TM), 34 others were reported with the last at Timmouth Channel on 11/5 (CJF). See the winter report for later stragglers. American Woodcock peaked at MNWR on 10/20 when 50 were counted (JNi, TM). Only 25 others were reported, the last being 1 at Danby on 10/29 (CJF).

GULLS AND TERNS

About 700 Bonaparte's Gulls were reported throughout the season. The species was seen throughout Aug. on L. Champlain beginning with 3 at WRD on 8/7 (JDM); high counts included 175 at Blodgett's in Burlington on 11/5 (JDM), and ca. 200 in Shelburne Bay on 11/20 (MPB). 'Bonies' are rarely reported from the Connecticut River Valley, so 1 at the Retreat Meadows in Brattleboro on 11/15 was noteworthy (fide LPM). High counts of the Ring-billed Gull are indicative of its widespread abundance in the Champlain Lowlands; maxima were 380+ on 9/5 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM,JPM,VX), 600+ at Burlington on 11/18 (WDB), and 470+ in St. Albans and Swanton on 11/20 (WRB,MJM). High counts of Herring Gull were 450+ at Burlington on 11/12 (WGE), and 80 in the Connecticut River Valley at Hartford (50) and Rockingham (30) on 11/13 (WGE,NLM). There was a single Iceland Gull report, 1 first-winter bird was seen at Burlington from 11/12-13 (WGE,DLC,KH). About 140 Great Black-backed Gulls were reported with a high count of 50 on 11/19 at Burlington (DLC) where the species was observed from Aug. onward; the only sighting reported away from L. Champlain was of a second-winter bird at L. Morey on 11/6 (WGE). The occurrence of 2 first-winter BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES at the Retreat Meadows in Brattleboro on 11/5 was without precedent for the upper Connecticut River Valley (DUW).

BLACK-LEGGED  
KITTIWAKE



Poor breeding success for the Common Tern was evident at the WRD staging area where the species occurred from 8/7-8/24 with a max. of only 10 on 8/7 (JDM). As recently as 1979, over 200 terns staged at this site. There were five reports of Black Tern: 2 were sighted at WRD on 8/7 (JDM), 4 were observed at DCWMA on 8/7 (WGE,NLM), 1 was at WRD on 8/25 (KHD), 2 were noted at DCWMA on 9/1 (RHH), and 1 was seen in Burlington on 9/10 (JRA), a later than average date.

DOVES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

Counts of 225+ and 320 Rock Doves in the northern Champlain Lowlands in late Nov. (MJM,WRB,CCF) are indicative of this species' continued abundance in farmland and towns; a pair was observed copulating on 11/26 in Proctor (with snow on the ground!) (RWP). Over 600 Mourning Doves were reported; with the best count 60+ on 11/6 at White River Jct. (WGE). It is interesting to note that as recently as the 1930's, this species was considered rare and local. There were only five reports of the Black-billed Cuckoo: 1 was noted at Winhall on 8/2 (WJN), 2 were found at Woodstock on 8/9 (WGE,NLM,JMN), 1 was banded at Marsh-

-31- field on 8/19 (MFM), 1 was located at HC on 8/23 (WJN), and an imm. was seen in New Haven on 9/23 (KHD). The Yellow-billed Cuckoo was reported three times; 1 ran afoul of a window in New Haven on 9/24 (KHD), 1 was observed in Fayston on 10/1 (FAP), and 1 lingered to 10/16 at Brownsville (BMH). Reports of Eastern Screech-Owl numbered two; the species occurred throughout the fall at MNWR where the peak count was 3 on 10/15 (JNi,TM), and a single bird was encountered at Mt. Independence in Orwell on 8/28 (SLM). On 10/15 8 Great Horned Owls were located at MNWR (JNi,TM); a total of 14 others were reported. Six Barred Owls on 10/15 represents the seasonal max. at MNWR (JNi,TM); an additional 14 were reported from other locations. Reports of the Northern Saw-whet Owl included one calling during "late summer" at Winhall (PC), 1 on 9/4 at Ferrisburg (BPG, via JID,MCD), the first of two banded at Ferdinand by M.F. Metcalf netted on 9/9, a rehabilitation bird picked up in Hardwick on 9/14 (fide JDS), 1 heard and seen at Woodstock from 10/10-19 (JMN), 1 which hit a chain-link fence in Fairlee and recovered on 10/19 (VINS), and a convalescent bird received from Brandon at VINS on 10/30. There was a massive flight of the Common Nighthawk from 8/25-27; high counts during this period include 400 on 8/25 at Guilford (fide WDN), 150 at Brattleboro (WDN), and 130 at Hartford (WGE,NLM) on 8/26, and "100's" between Norwich and Hartland on 8/27 (LDL); the last was seen at Lincoln Hill in Starksboro on 9/11 (WRB).

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

All but one of the 286 Chimney Swifts reported were during Aug. The high was 80+ on 8/25 at Woodstock (WGE), and the last was seen at HC on 9/3 (WJN). Nearly 80 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were reported; a male was still displaying in Proctor on 8/5 (RWP), the best count was 5 on 8/3 at Ferrisburg (JID,MCD), and the last reported was seen at Woodstock on 9/25 (HEP). The Belted Kingfisher was seen throughout the season; high counts were 8 on 9/6 along Lewis Creek in Ferrisburg (JID,MCD), and 10 along East Creek in Orwell on 9/18 (ELW). Red-headed Woodpecker reports were fairly widespread and included a number of late reports: a pair of adults and 2 to 3 juveniles were seen in Grand Isle from July through 9/10 (DJH, photos), and 1 was seen at MNWR on 9/7 (JNi,TM). Later reports included a series of records from Hartland probably involving the same individual, from mid-Nov. to mid-Dec. (RPP), 11/26 (WLP), and 11/29-30 at Hartland village (HD). Other reports were 1 at Brattleboro on 11/15 (fide LPM), and 1 at Shoreham on 11/27 (ELW). The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker migration peaked in late Sept. and early Oct. with a max. of 12 on 10/1 at Reading (FMH); the last was reported from Reading on 10/23 (FMN); 6 were banded, 4 in northern VT (MFM, VINS). Reported numbers of Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were exactly equivalent (ca. 100 for each species). Three Downys were banded, 2 by M.F. Metcalf, and 2 Hairys were banded, 1 at each banding station (MFM,VINS). A Black-backed Woodpecker at Moose Bog in Ferdinand on 9/5 was the only one reported (WJN). Over 200 Northern Flickers were reported. High counts ranged from late Aug. to early Oct. and included 25 on 8/24 at DCWMA (WJN), and 17 on 9/25 at Tirmouth (CJF). Most flickers had departed by mid-Oct., but, as usual, a few were seen through the end of the season. About 55 Pileated Woodpeckers were reported with several observers reporting high counts of three.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Sixteen Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported with 5 on 9/5 at Reading, a very good total for this uncommon migrant (FMH); the last bird reported was banded (the first since 1976) at Woodstock on 9/13 (VINS).

High counts of the Eastern Wood-Pewee were 8 on 8/13 at Reading (FMH), and 9 on 9/15 at Shoreham (rather late for such a count) (ELW); the last was reported from Albany on 9/30 (TP). The total of 18 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers is about average for this unobtrusive species; only 3 were banded with 2 netted in northern VT (MFM,VINS). The last reported was observed at Woodstock on 9/15 (CCF). Aug. reports of, presumably, singing or calling Alder and Willow Flycatchers included reports of Alders on 8/13 at S. Lincoln (KHD), and 8/21 at Arlington (KHD), and a Willow on 8/11 at Addison (KHD). Seven undifferentiated "Traill's" Flycatchers were banded, 5 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS), and the last was retrapped at Woodstock on 9/14 (VINS). Not unexpectedly the Least Flycatcher easily outnumbered the other Empidonax flycatchers; high counts were 5 on 8/28 at WRD (WGE), and 5 banded at Woodstock on 9/7 (VINS); 11 of the 14 Least Flycatchers banded this autumn were caught at Woodstock (VINS,MFM). Latest reported was 1 at Albany on 9/21 (TP). Very late were two unidentified Empidonaxes at Brattleboro on 10/8 (JJC). The Eastern Phoebe was recorded in normal numbers, highs included 8 on 8/30 and 9/19 at Shoreham (ELW); the last reported was at Woodstock on 10/24 (WGE). However, a later bird was seen early in the subsequent season. Over three-quarters of the 31 Great Crested Flycatchers reported were noted during Aug. Up to four were seen in a day during Aug. and the latest was observed in Shoreham on 9/14 (SLM). About 200 Eastern Kingbirds were reported. In general, this species' migration seemed delayed by at least a week this autumn, when the high of 30 on 9/5 at DCWMA occurred at a time during which the species is normally scarce (WGE,NLM,JPM,VX); the latest set a new standard for tardiness of 10/5 at Woodstock (m.ob.). The Horned Lark was rather lightly reported with the high count of 42 at DCWMA on 8/7 consisting of postbreeding flocks of locally breeding birds of the race praticola (WGE,NLM). The first obvious migrants were 5 birds of the arctic and subarctic breeding form alpestris at Woodstock on 10/9 (WGE,NLM). Over 60 Purple Martins were reported; the best count was 15 on 8/24 at McCuen Slang in Addison (WJN), and the last were 5 on 9/5 at Burlington (JDM). The Tree Swallow was reported in average numbers, with the max. 750 at DCWMA on 8/24 (WJN), and the latest 2 at Weybridge on 10/7 (MBN). There were four Aug. reports of Northern Rough-winged Swallow: 8 were noted at Middlebury on 8/9 (ELW), 2 were seen at Shoreham on 8/10 (ELW), 5 to 10 were observed at DCWMA, Panton on 8/11 (KHD), and the last was sighted at New Haven on 8/17 (KHD). The Bank Swallow was reported in rather small numbers: adults were still feeding dependent young on 8/4 at Quechee (JMN); the high count was 25-50 at DCWMA on 8/11 (KHD), and the last reported were 12 on 9/18 at DCWMA, Panton (WGE). A total of 76 Cliff Swallows was reported: the best count submitted was 22 on 9/18 at DCWMA, Panton (WGE), and the last was seen at WRD on 9/24 (JDM). The Barn Swallow was the second most numerous swallow behind Tree. The highest count was 80+ at DCWMA, Panton on 9/18 (WGE). This species straggled well into Oct. For the second year in a row, 2 were at Orwell on 10/16 (SLM), and 1 was observed at L. Morey from 10/16 to 10/30 (CCF,WGE).

#### JAYS THROUGH WRENS

A single Gray Jay was banded at Ferdinand (MFM), and 3 were seen at Moose Bog, Ferdinand on 9/5 (WJN). Although it is a common winter bird, the Blue Jay population also has a sizable migratory component, and, as is normal, the autumn flight of these birds peaked in mid-Sept., with high counts of 202 on 9/14 at Woodstock (WGE,NLM, et al.), 278 at Woodstock 9/18 (CCF), and 280 at Shoreham on 9/20 (ELW). As with the Blue Jay, the American Crow has a substantial migration;

-32- high counts during the Oct. peak included 3154 over Fuller Mt., Ferrisburg on 10/16 (JID,MCD), and 820 at S. Duxbury on 10/21 (FAP). T. Palen of Albany noted that most crows had departed by the end of Oct., with only 4-5 wintering at a nearby farm, and a return movement in late February; a good documentation of the pattern of occurrence of crows in northeastern VT. The increase of the Common Raven has become an oft repeated theme and this autumn was no exception; 176 were reported with high counts exceeding all but a few previous autumnal maxima, and included 27 on 8/10 at S. Duxbury (FAP), 23 at Averill on 8/27 (m.ob.), 33 at Woodstock on 9/13 (WGE,NLM,DJG), and 21 at White Rocks Mt. on 10/21 (RWP). Reports from Shoreham, Sudbury and Orwell indicate a continued spread into the Champlain Lowlands. Numbers of the Black-capped Chickadee seemed average; up to 50/day were reported by observers, although most reports averaged 12+/day; 90 were banded, 53 at Woodstock and Hartford (VINS,MFM). Reports of Boreal Chickadee included 2 throughout the season at Craftsbury (TP), 1 at Groton S.F. on 8/22 (MJM), 10 at Moose Bog, Ferdinand on 10/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.), and 1 at Woodstock on 10/19 (WGE,NLM). About 20 Tufted Titmice were reported from 8/20 on, with most after late Sept. Records ranged northward to Colchester and Woodbury. Over 100 Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported, an above average figure. High counts indicate migration, as ca. 12 were seen passing the lookout at White Rocks Mt. on 9/18 (RWP), and 30 were observed at Reading on 10/8 (FMH). Numbers were high throughout the season in the southern Green Mts. at Winhall, where 10-15 were seen per day (WJN). Three were banded in northern VT (MFM). Numbers of White-breasted Nuthatch seem average with 95 reported. Fifty-four Brown Creepers were reported, an average number for this easily overlooked bird: 3 were banded at Woodstock (VINS). Just 30 House Wrens were reported, the cold wet spring may have had an effect on this species' VT population. The best count reported was 4 on 9/18 (CJF), and the last was observed at Bartonville on 10/11 (TEJ). Two were banded at Woodstock (VINS). Forty-one Winter Wrens were recorded with the majority (25) noted from late Sept. through Oct.; counts of 6 were achieved on 4 dates at Reading (FMH); the last was found at Winhall on 11/10 (WJN). Winter Wrens were still feeding young at Marshfield on 8/15 (MFM), where 1 was banded. A single juvenile Sedge Wren was observed and photographed at Panton on 8/7 (WGE,NLM). Twenty-six Marsh Wrens were reported on 7 dates from 8/7 (max. of 9 at DCWMA) (WGE,NLM) to 9/24 at WRD (JDM).

#### KINGLETS THROUGH THRUSHES

The Golden-crowned Kinglet evidences improvement over numbers reported over the last few autumns, with ca. 120 recorded for the season; high counts were 25 on 10/1 at Reading (FMH), and 16 on 10/15 at Ferdinand (WGE,NLM, et al.); 1 was banded by Metcalf. The Ruby-crowned Kinglet appears to have almost recovered the losses sustained during the late 1970's; 270 were reported with an impressive maximum of 75 on 10/1 at Reading (FMH); 36 were banded with 22 netted at Woodstock (VINS,MFM); the last was at Woodstock on 10/24 (JMN). Reports of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers included 1 at Shoreham on 8/7 (ELW), a female at WRD on 8/7 (WGE,NLM), a male on 8/28 at WRD (WGE), a female at Woodstock on 9/1 (JMN), 2 at Shoreham on 9/1 (ELW), and 1 at HC on 9/3 (WJN). Certainly the best rarity of the season was the NORTHERN WHEATEAR at Cornwall from 9/11-17 which was located by Bruce and Judy Peterson and observed by many. A photograph taken on 9/11 (W) indicates a bird of the Baffin and Greenland population, based on the bird's highly coloured breast, erect posture and tendency to perch well off the ground. This represents the second Vermont record.



NORTHERN WHEATEAR - Cornwall  
September 11, 1983. Photo by Wayne Scott

About 140 Eastern Bluebirds were reported: the best count was 11 on 10/17 at Waterbury (DL), and the latest reported were 7 on 11/13 at Woodbury (TP). A handful of Veeries was reported; 11 were banded with 6 'ringed' at Marshfield (MFM). The latest was at Woodstock on 9/15 (CRP). Records of Gray-cheeked Thrush included 2 banded at Marshfield (MFM), and 2 at Winhall on 9/27 and 10/3 respectively (WJN). Over 150 Swainson's Thrushes were reported, 91 were banded with 65 of these in northern VT (MFM,VINS). The best count was 25 on 9/12 at Woodstock (JMN), and the last were 2 on Mt. Philo on 10/21 (JID,MCD). The Hermit Thrush was reported in good numbers, with a total of about 140 recorded. High counts were essentially synchronous, with 10 at Winhall (WJN) and 14 at Reading (FMH) on 10/10, and 7 banded at Woodstock on 10/11 (VINS). The latest was located at Colchester on 11/12 (JDM). Forty-four Wood Thrushes were reported. Two were banded at Marshfield (MFM), the high count was 15 on 9/12 at Woodstock (JMN), and the last was observed at Clarendon on 10/9 (CJF). The American Robin migration was most evident from late Sept. through Oct.: high counts included 126 at Quechee on 10/9 (WGE,NLM), and 200 on 10/17 at HC (WJN); 8 were banded, 6 at Marshfield (MFM).

MIMICS THROUGH VIREOS

Over 230 Gray Catbirds were reported, 43 of these were banded, with 38 netted at Woodstock (VINS,MFM); the highest counts occurred from the second through fourth weeks of Sept. with 12 at Woodstock 9/20-21 (WGE,NLM, et al.), and 10 at HC on 9/20 and 26 (WJN). The last was noted at Woodstock on 10/23 (JMN). The total of 7 Northern Mockingbirds reported is a bit lower than has been normal in recent years; records occurred from 8/31 to 11/26 and ranged north to Milton; all but 1 report were from the Champlain Lowlands. Over 50 Brown Thrashers were reported with 3 banded at Woodstock (VINS); the last was located at Woodstock on 10/5 (WGE,NLM,TEJ,AJ). The Water Pipit was well reported. The first were 2 encountered at WRD on 9/10 (JDM). High counts included 50 at New Haven on 10/7 (KHD), 50 at Woodstock on 10/9 (WGE,NLM), 58 at Woodstock on 10/11 (WGE,NLM), and 50 at the Springfield-Rockingham line meadow on 10/17 (WJN). One banded at Woodstock on 10/18 was the first for VINS; the last were 5 at Woodstock on 11/1 (NLM,WGE,

DJG). There was a heavy Cedar Waxwing flight in eastern Vermont during mid-Sept.; good counts included 200-300 at Grafton on 9/10 (DC), 167 at Woodstock on 9/12 (JMN), and 250 on 9/14 at HC (WJN). Ten were banded, 6 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). Scattered flocks were reported from the Champlain Lowlands through the end of the season. Reports of the Northern Shrike included 1 sighted along the Lamoille R. in Colchester on 10/23 (JDM), an imm. at Tirmouth from 10/24 to 11/5 (CJF), and 1 observed at Hartford on 11/29 (GFE). A lone Loggerhead Shrike was observed at S. Woodstock on 9/23 (BEP). Counts of 3400 on 10/9 at White River Jct. (WGE,NLM), 1000 at Orwell on 10/15 (SLM), and 1000 at Shoreham on 10/29 (ELW), are indicative of the health of the European Starling population. Just over 50 Solitary Vireos were reported: 8 were banded, 5 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS); the best count was 8 on 8/12 at Reading, indicative of post-breeding numbers there (FMH); and the latest was at Tirmouth on 10/9 (CJF). A handful of Yellow-throated Vireos was reported: the max. was 4 on 8/21 at Woodstock (JMN), and the latest reports were of 2 at Reading and 3 at Woodstock on 9/10 (FMH,JMN). Three dozen Warbling Vireos were recorded: 1 was banded at Woodstock (VINS); the highest number reported was 4 on 9/19 at Shoreham (ELW); and the latest were 1 at Burlington (JDM), and 1 at WRD (WGE,NLM) on 9/25. Nine Philadelphia Vireos were reported; 3 of these were banded, with 2 caught at Marshfield, and the last bird of the autumn netted at Woodstock on 9/18 (MFM,VINS). Not unexpectedly the Red-eyed Vireo was the most commonly reported vireo; 113 were reported with a maximum of 8 on 8/28 at Shoreham (ELW), and a late report of 10/4 at Woodstock (VINS); 22 were banded this autumn, with 12 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS).

WOOD WARBLERS

Always a good report during autumn, a male Golden-winged Warbler was observed at S. Duxbury on 8/24 (FAP). Over 200 Tennessee Warblers were reported, including 101 banded, with 75 netted in northern VT (MFM,VINS). High counts ranged from late Aug. to late Sept. and included 7 at S. Duxbury on 8/24 (FAP), 8 at Jamaica on 8/14 (ELW), 9 banded at Woodstock 9/20 (VINS), and 8 at Gile Mt., Norwich on 8/24 (WGE,NLM); the latest was observed at Quechee on 10/10 (CCF). The rare Orange-crowned Warbler was reported twice: 1 was located at W. Rutland on 10/3 (LHP), and 1 was sighted at Winhall on 10/10 (WJN). One hundred forty-six Nashville Warblers were reported: 84 were banded, with 50 caught at Marshfield and Ferdinand (MFM,VINS). High counts were 8 on 8/28 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 11 "ringed" at Woodstock on 9/20 (VINS). The last was at Winhall on 10/16 (WJN). Sixteen Northern Parulas were reported: 1 was banded by Metcalf, and the last was recorded at Reading on 9/24 (FMH). Two-thirds of the 44 Yellow Warblers reported were observed in Aug: the high count was 12 on 8/7 at WRD (WGE,NLM), and the latest remained until 10/2 at Colchester (JDM). Nearly 70 Chestnut-sided Warblers were reported: 15 of these were banded, 13 at Marshfield Pd. (MFM,VINS). Maxima were 10 each on 8/14 and 8/24 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 5 at HC on 9/3 (WJN). One at Winhall on 10/4 was remarkably late (WJN). The Magnolia Warbler was observed in average numbers: 125 were reported with 32 banded, 23 at Marshfield and Ferdinand (MFM,VINS). Rather late were two to three fledglings attended by an adult on 8/25 at Groton S.F. (MJM). The migration peaked in mid-Sept. as indicated by the high of 14 on 9/12 at Woodstock (JMN); the latest was at Woodstock on 10/17 (CRP). The Cape May Warbler was exceptionally common during early Sept.; one observer termed it "the second most common warbler in early fall" (KHD), and an amazing total of 50 was recorded at Reading on 9/6 where the species fed on an abun-

dance of blackberries (FMH). One was banded by each -34- the 47 Ovenbirds reported were banded; 10 of the 19 bander this autumn (MEM,VINS); and the last was observed at Colchester on 10/1 (JDM). The Black-throated Blue Warbler is sometimes double-brooded (N. Rodenhouse pers. comm.), therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that a tailless fledgling was encountered at Marshfield on 8/15 (MJM). Twenty Black-throated Blues were banded, with 19 handled at Marshfield (MEM,VINS); the high count was 12 on 9/10 at Reading (FMH); and the last was observed at Winhall on 9/25 (WJN). A female Yellow-rumped Warbler was observed with a food bolus, presumably for young, on 8/4 at Marshfield (MJM). In terms of raw numbers the Yellow-rump was the most common warbler reported, with 760 recorded; 54 were banded, 36 at Woodstock (VINS, MEM). The peak of the migration ranged from mid-Sept. to mid-Oct., with high counts of 40 on 10/3 at Shoreham (ELW), 34 at Hartland on 10/9 (CCF), and 50+ at Addison on 10/15 (JID, MCD). Yellow-rumps were observed hover-gleaning flies off the ceiling of a barn interior in Timmouth on 9/24 (PB). The last was sighted at W. Halifax on 11/20 (BHA). A total of 153 Black-throated Green Warblers were reported: 17 were banded, with 13 caught at Marshfield Pd. (MEM,VINS); a female was observed with food for nestlings or fledglings on 8/2 at Marshfield (MJM). The bulk of the migration occurred during early and mid-Sept., with high counts of 8 on 9/4 at Hartland (WGE, NLM), and 9 at Shoreham on 9/13 (ELW). The latest was 1 at Woodstock on 10/10 (CCF). Over 60 Blackburnian Warblers were reported: maxima were 13 on 8/24 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 7 on 9/13 at Winhall (WJN), 6 were banded at Marshfield Pd. (MEM). The last was 1 at Winhall on 9/29 (WJN). The Pine Warbler is a rare and local breeding species in Vermont whose breeding range barely extends north of the state; therefore it is a rare migrant seldom seen away from its chosen habitat of tall pines. It is also quite similar in ad. plumage to the immature Blackpoll Warbler which is often just as green and yellow as any ad. Pine. In fact, many Pine Warblers in autumn are quite brown and lack any bright yellow in their plumage. For these reasons some reports of Pine Warbler have not been used either because of excessive high counts (unaccompanied by details) or lack of accompanying Blackpoll Warbler reports or details separating Pine from Blackpoll. The two reports which met these criteria were: 1 on 9/8 at W. Windsor (CCF), and a well detailed report of an ad. at Woodstock on 9/11 (JMN). An excellent 32 Palm Warblers were reported: quite early was 1 on 9/5 at Ferrisburg (JID, MCD); high counts included 3 on 10/1 at Reading (FMH), 3 at Quechee and 1 at Pomfret on 10/1 (WGE, NLM), and 3 at White River Jct. and 1 at Woodstock on 10/9 (WGE, NLM); 2 were banded at each banding station (VINS, MEM). The last bird was observed in Cavendish on 10/20 (TEJ). Just over 130 Bay-breasted Warblers were reported: the earliest migratory Bay-breast was noted on 8/17 at Woodstock (WGE, NLM); the best count was 20 on 9/4 near Hart I., Hartland (NLM, WGE); all 38 banded this autumn were netted by M.F. Metcalf. The last was 1 at Winhall on 9/29 (WJN). The earliest migrant among 41 Blackpoll Warblers reported was seen at WRD on 8/28 (WGE). Ten were banded, 9 at Marshfield Pd. (MEM, VINS); the maximum was 6 on 9/19 at Middlebury (KHD); the last was observed at WRD on 10/1 (JDM). About three dozen Black-and-white Warblers were reported: an ad. was observed with a fledgling on 8/1 at Woodstock (JMN); 6 were banded, 5 at Marshfield Pd. (MEM, VINS); the high count was 4 on 8/24 at S. Duxbury (FAP); and the latest was banded at Woodstock on 10/4 (VINS). Just over 60 American Redstarts were observed: an ad. was observed with a dependent fledgling at Woodstock on 8/1 (JMN); 10 were banded at Marshfield Pd. (MEM). The best daily total was 6 on 9/5 at Burlington (JDM), and the last was at WRD on 10/16 (JDM). Forty percent of the 47 Ovenbirds reported were banded; 10 of the 19 banded were "ringed" at Marshfield Pd. (MEM, VINS); fledglings were seen with parents as late as 8/18 at Groton S.F. (MJM); the max. was 5 on 8/24 at S. Duxbury (FAP); the last was 1 banded at Woodstock on 10/11 (VINS). The Northern Waterthrush migration was inconspicuous with only 16 reported: 4 were banded at Marshfield Pd. (MEM); the most observed in one day was 3 on 9/19 in Burlington and Colchester (JDM), and the latest was at HC on 10/3 (WJN). A single Louisiana Waterthrush was observed at W. Brattleboro from 8/12-18 (JJC). There were two well-detailed reports of the scarce Connecticut Warbler. An ad. was observed at Woodstock on 9/10 (JMN), and an imm. was described from Winhall on 9/16 (WJN). Just 8 Mourning Warblers were reported: 4 of these were banded, 3 at Woodstock (VINS, MEM), with the last 1 on 10/11 (VINS). Just over 300 Common Yellowthroats were reported, 137 of these were banded with 98 caught at Woodstock (VINS, MEM); 3 newly fledged yellowthroats were seen at Woodstock on 8/26 (JMN); high counts included 9 on 8/31 at Woodstock (WGE, NLM), and 10 banded each day on 9/12 and 21 at Woodstock (VINS). Four Nov. yellowthroats included 3 from the third week or later: 1 was at Hardwick on 11/20 (GPL), another was present at St. Albans Bay SP on 11/20 (MJM, WRB), and the last was at Brattleboro on 11/27 (JJC). About three dozen Wilson's Warblers were noted: totals of this diminutive warbler were low at banding stations with just 6 marked, 3 by each bander (VINS, MEM); no more than 3 were reported on any single day and the last was at WRD on 10/1 (JDM). Fifty-one Canada Warblers were reported: 19 were banded, 14 at Marshfield (MEM, VINS). The high count was 5 on 9/3 at Reading (FMH); and the latest were 2 at Reading on 9/24 (FMH).

#### TANAGER THROUGH SPARROWS

The Scarlet Tanager was observed in normal numbers with a total of 62 reported; 9 were banded with 6 netted at Marshfield (MEM, VINS). High counts were 6 from 9/10-11 at Reading (FMH), and 5 at Woodstock on 9/11 (JMN); latest were 2 at Shoreham on 9/28 (ELW). Over 100 Northern Cardinals were reported: 2 were banded at Woodstock (VINS). There were several reports of parents with young; tailless fledglings were reported from Woodstock on 9/7 (JMN), a female was observed feeding a juvenile at Randolph on 9/14 (EWC, MCC), and 2 fledglings were still soliciting food from their parents on 10/16 at Proctor (RWP). The seasonal high was 13 at Ferrisburg on 11/26, all of which were seen at a single feeder (JID, MCD). About 100 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported: 9 were banded, 6 at Marshfield (MEM, VINS). The daily max. was 13 on 9/12 at Woodstock (JMN); the latest was at Winhall on 10/11 (WJN). Just over 30 Indigo Buntings were noted: the high count was 5 on 8/31 at Woodstock (WGE, NLM), and the latest was observed at HC on 10/3 (WJN). A total of 46 Rufous-sided Towhees was reported: daily counts did not exceed 4; 4 were banded at Woodstock (VINS); and the last was a straggler at Brattleboro observed from 11/18 well into Dec. (JJC). A little over 400 American Tree Sparrows were reported: the earliest was at Ferrisburg on 10/14 (JID, MCD), and the best count was 55+ on 11/20 at North Hero (MJM, WRB). Six tree sparrows were banded at Woodstock (VINS). About 325 Chipping Sparrows were observed; 2 were banded by VINS; maxima included 50+ on 8/24 at Rutland (RHH), and 50+ on 10/2 at Norwich (WGE, NLM); the latest was at S. Duxbury on 11/2 (FAP). Fifty Field Sparrows were reported: 7 were banded by VINS; and the reported max. was 7 on 10/11 at Woodstock (WGE, NLM, DJG). The Vesper Sparrow continues to decline as only 11 were reported this autumn: 1 was noted at New Haven on 8/1 (KHD), 1 was at DCWMA on 8/24 (WJN), another was observed there on 8/31 (FAP), 1 was seen at Shoreham on 9/27 (ELW), 1 was found at S. Londonderry on 9/30

(WJN), 1 was sighted at Huntington on 10/3 (JDM), 2 were at White River Jct. on 10/9 (WGE), 1 was at Pine I., Colchester on 10/13 (JDM), and the latest were 2 at Middlebury on 10/19 (KHD). About 120 Savannah Sparrows were reported including 9 banded at Woodstock (VINS): high counts were 25 at DCWMA on 8/24 (WJN), and 16 at White River Jct. on 10/9 (WGE,NLM); late birds included 1 at S. Duxbury 11/15-18 (FAP), and 1 at DCWMA, Addison on 11/19 (WGE). The Grasshopper Sparrow was twice reported from DCWMA, a juvenile on 8/7 (m.ob.), and 1 on 8/24 (WJN). The Fox Sparrow was reported in excellent numbers, over 80 were observed beginning with 4 at Woodstock on 10/11 (WGE, NLM,DJG). Highs included up to 5 or 6 at Brattleboro (JJC), and 6 at Hartford on 11/1 (WGE,NLM,GFE): 10 were banded by VINS, the best total since 1978; the last reported was at Hartford on 11/19 (GFE). Over 600 Song Sparrows were reported: 78 were banded with 64 "ringed" at Woodstock (VINS,MFM). Two nests containing eggs were noted at Shoreham: one contained 5 eggs on 8/2 and the second had 3 eggs in it on 8/23, which hatched the following day (ELW); young were being fed in the nest on 8/30 at Woodstock, and fledglings were observed there on 9/9 (JMN). High counts included 30 at Quechee and 40 at Woodstock on 10/9 (WGE,NLM); 75 at HC on 10/11 (WJN); and 25 banded at Woodstock on 10/19 (VINS). Seventy-seven Lincoln's Sparrows were reported: the species was reported on its northern VT breeding areas in mid-Aug., however the earliest migrants appear to have been 1 at Colchester (JDM), and 1 at Hartland (WGE, NLM) on 9/4; 26 were banded this autumn with 23 marked at Woodstock (VINS,MFM). The high count was 8 on 9/20 at Woodstock (VINS), and the latest was at New Haven on 10/24 (KHD). About 100 Swamp Sparrows were noted: 15 were banded, 10 at Marshfield Pd. (MFM,VINS); high counts were 8 on 10/1 at Quechee (WGE,NLM), and 10 at HC on 10/3 (WJN). The species was reported to the end of the season, e.g. 1 observed on 11/21 at Brattleboro (JJC). Nearly 1600 White-throated Sparrows were reported. Most observers indicate a migratory peak during the first and second weeks of Oct.; high counts included 250 at Reading on 10/1 (FMH), and 142 in Norwich and Hartford on 10/2 (WGE,NLM); 165 White-throats were banded with most (106) handled at northern Vermont sites (MFM,VINS). The species was reported into Dec. A total of 137 White-crowned Sparrows was observed, beginning with 1 at Barnard on 9/23 (JNF); 5 were banded at Woodstock, all on 10/18 (VINS). The best numbers were reported during a well-defined peak 10/9-10; maxima were 15 on 10/9 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 10 at White River Jct. and 34 at Woodstock also on 10/9 (WGE,NLM). The species was last reported during this season on 11/21 at S. Duxbury (FAP). About 1200 Dark-eyed Juncos were reported: 52 were banded, 48 at Woodstock (VINS,MFM); the migratory peak appears to have occurred largely in mid-Oct.; high counts were 100 at Reading on 10/10 (FMH), 100 at WRD on 10/15 (JDM), and 75 at Ferrisburg on 11/6 (JID,MCD). A single Lapland Longspur was observed at S. Londonderry on 10/9 (WJN). A total of 313 Snow Buntings was reported: exceptionally early were an unspecified number on 9/13 at Tinnmouth (PB), by far the earliest arrival over the last ten years. Buntings were not reported again until 10/22 when 5 were observed atop Snake Mt. in Addison (KHD); the largest number seen was 110 on 10/29 at WRD (JDM).

#### BLACKBIRDS THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

Just over 280 Bobolinks were noted: high counts included 60+ on 8/28 at Quechee (WGE), and 100 at DCWMA on 9/4 (WJN); the latest was observed at White River Jct. on 10/9 (WGE,NLM). A sampling of high counts of the Red-winged Blackbird is indicative of its abundance: 750 were observed at HC on 10/11 (WJN), "thousands" were present in the Tinnmouth Channel on

10/26 (CJF), and 2000 were seen at Shoreham on 10/29 (ELW); the species remained locally numerous until the end of the season, as indicated by 64 at Alburg on 11/20 (MJM,WRB). Ninety-four Eastern Meadowlarks were reported: a large post-breeding flock provided the high of 40+ at Franklin on 8/12 (PJM). The species was reported into early Nov., however, winter records indicate that meadowlarks lingered through the end of autumn. The Rusty Blackbird was well reported: the maximum was an excellent 100 on 9/20 at Reading (FMH); the last were 3 at HC on 11/7 (WJN). Observers should be aware that large autumn flocks of grackles sometimes give the appearance of being Rusty Blackbirds. These flocks are largely composed of brown juveniles and short-tailed moulting adults which do not have the classic long keel-shaped tail of breeding grackles. Common Grackles were reported throughout the season with a max. of 2600+ on 10/9 at White River Jct. (WGE, NLM). About 1500 Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported: the species was noted throughout the season with high counts of 300 on 8/30 at Albany (TP), and 200+ at Tinnmouth on 10/28 (RHH). A total of 67 Northern Orioles was observed: 8 were banded this autumn, 5 at Marshfield Pd. (MFM,VINS); high counts were from Aug. and included 5 at Woodstock on 8/21 (JMN), and 5 at HC on 8/23 (WJN). Immature orioles continue to appear at feeders well after most orioles are in the tropics: 1 was noted at a Manchester feeder from 11/17 into Dec. (fide NS), and 2 were observed in Ira on 11/22 (RJ, fide NS). About three dozen Pine Grosbeaks were reported: 3 at Ferrisburg on 10/12 arrived a month ahead of their fellows (JID, MCD); the next report did not occur until 11/10. The best count was 10 on 11/28 in the Green Mts. at Shrewsbury (LPS). About 350 Purple Finches were noted: 159 were banded, 154 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS); the max. was 50 on 10/2 at Winhall (WJN). The species virtually disappeared after Oct. with only a handful seen beyond that month. The number of House Finches reported equalled those of the Purple Finch: the former species was reported virtually throughout central Vermont including such hill towns as Randolph and Shrewsbury, and well to the north in western Vermont, in Milton. Nine were banded at Hartford by VINS; high counts were 25+ on the Middlebury Campus throughout the season (KHD), and 39 at Hartford on 11/13 (WGE,NLM). There were two temporally well spaced reports of the Red Crossbill: 4 were observed foraging in spruce at Barnard on 8/13 (RAP), and 1 was sighted over the WHL on 10/2 (WJN). A lone Common Redpoll was seen with goldfinches on 11/28 at Shoreham (ELW). Only 33 Pine Siskins were noted this autumn, and only one observer saw them prior to Nov.; the earliest were 4 on 10/2 at Gile Mt., Norwich (WGE,NLM), and the high count was 20+ on 10/26 at Hartland (WGE,NLM). Over 500 American Goldfinches were reported: 5 were banded at Woodstock (VINS). A nest with young was located at Woodstock on 9/13 (WGE, NLM); young fledged at Woodstock on 8/30, 9/3 and 9/19 (JMN,WGE,NLM); dependent young were still in evidence in Proctor on 9/10 (RWP), and in Woodstock on 10/2 (JMN); the max. was 42 on 11/9 at Shoreham (ELW); the species had become quite local by the end of November. Over 1100 Evening Grosbeaks were reported: there were several Aug. reports with a noticeable hiatus in Sept. before the main wave of presumably boreal nesters arrived in Oct.; 6 were banded at each banding station this autumn (VINS,MFM). Thirteen percent of the total reported were noted early in the season; high counts during this time were from the Green Mts., with 50 at Shrewsbury on 8/10 (LPS). Late autumn maxima included 100 at Reading on 10/17 (FMH), and 80+ at Woodstock on 10/19 (WGE,NLM, et al.). The House Sparrow continues to be, in the words of one observer, "omnipresent" (MBN). The species shared a roost location with House Finches at Middlebury indicating no obvious competition over roost sites (KHD).

Abbreviations Used in the Text

DCWMA - Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area  
 HC - Herrick's Cove  
 MNWR - Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge  
 Mt. - Mountain  
 NA - Nature Area  
 Pd. - Pond  
 RVB - Records of Vermont Birds  
 R. - River  
 SF - State Forest  
 SP - State Park  
 WHL - Winhall Hawk Lookout  
 WRD - Winooski River Delta

ad. - adult  
 imm. - immature  
 j. - juvenile

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WDN	Whit Nichols	RNS	Bob Spear
JMN	Julie Nicholson	FS	Freda Stevens
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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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 VERMONT INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE, Woodstock, Vermont 05091 802/457-2779

RECORDS OF VERMONT BIRDS - Vol. 11, No. 4; Vol. 12, No. 1  
 FALL 1983; WINTER 1983-84 - published December 1984  
 Vermont Institute of Natural Science  
 Woodstock, Vermont 05091

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 Non-profit Organization  
 Woodstock, Vermont  
 Permit No. 4