

Records of Vermont Birds

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FALL MIGRATION 1984

1 August - 30 November

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If the 1984 autumn migration was only regarded from the perspective of the songbird flight it might be considered a supreme disappointment. Numbers of migrant passerines trickled through Vermont at best. The season was redeemed however by season-long broad coverage by birders and some exciting events such as the third drawdown of Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area and an impressive waterbird fallout during the last week of October.

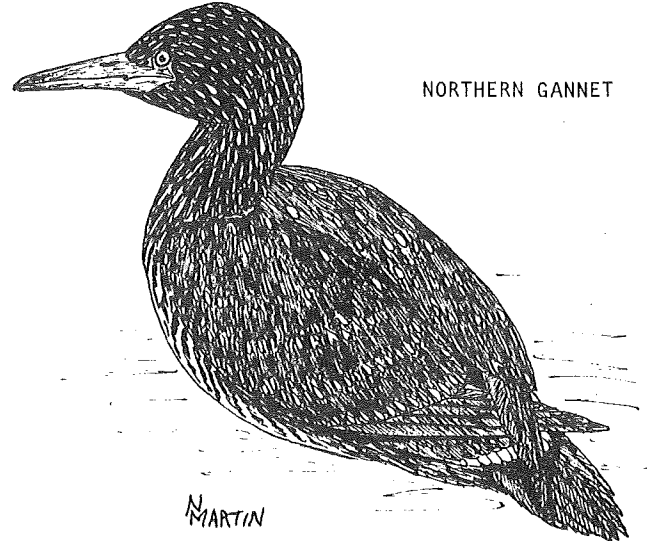
August was warmer than average and at its driest levels in a decade. The only notable migrant fallout was associated with the passage of a cold front on 19 August. Good numbers of warblers were observed at S. Duxbury and a good wader (shorebird) fallout was evident at Dead Creek. High pressure on the 21st dropped the temperature at East Haven to freezing.

September was brisk and dry, averaging a little cooler than normal and with less precipitation accumulated than in any year since 1978. An excellent wader fallout was noted on 15 September in association with the passage of a cold front. The best numbers of migrants seemed to be associated with weather conducive to comfortable birding rather than migrant fallout. Snow dusted the mountaintops and a hard freeze was recorded at higher elevations on 15-16 September and a Canadian high pressure system drove temperatures well down on 27 September.

October weather was highly variable; the first five days were damp and dreary. High pressure and cold temperatures predominated 5-7 October, including the Champlain and lower Connecticut Valleys' first frosts. The weather was warm and fair through much of the next two weeks. A waterbird fallout was associated with the successive passage of a warm front on 26 October and a cold front on 29 October. Especially good numbers of scoters, Brant, and waders were recorded during this period.

November was about average; the coldest reading was at W. Burke at 5° F. and relatively little snow fell. The major precipitation events of the month occurred on 5, 10-14, and 29 November. The second two weeks of the month were largely dry. A number of high counts of birds were concentrated around the period 17-21 November, which appears to be related to the passage of a cold front on 17 November, and the season's only notable snowfall on 19-21 November, with at least two locations reporting accumulations of 11 inches.

The totals of songbirds reported were well below numbers reported in most other years during the last decade. This was true for banders as well as birders. Banders at VINS trapped less than eighteen birds per day August-September (as opposed to 25-30/day over the last five years). A combination of factors contributed to the lackluster quality of the migration. Lack of strong cold fronts allowed migrants to trickle through Vermont on a broad front with very few local buildups in numbers. Some species may be involved in cyclic or possibly long-term declines, such as Swainson's Thrush and warblers which feed on the spruce budworm (resulting from the budworm outbreak of the



NORTHERN GANNET

late 70's having apparently run its course). Breeding success for local warblers may have been poor considering the very low numbers of caterpillars counted in central New Hampshire this summer at the Hubbard Brook Station (N.L. Rodenhouse pers. comm.). Lastly the wild food situation in Vermont this fall was excellent, tending to spread birds out and keeping young Blue Jays, chickadees, and juncos further north and in the woods.

The drawdown at Dead Creek produced a remarkable array of 29 wader species; compare this to totals of 17 and 18 species respectively from the Winooski Delta and the Burlington waterfront. Each Dead Creek drawdown has had its own character. The first in 1974 had an aura of discovery and was dominated by its major celebrity, an American White Pelican of long tenure. The 1982 drawdown was characterized by its excellent coverage by birders and high counts. The latest drawdown featured a longer season than either of the previous drawdowns and wetter conditions, which improved the reporting frequency of species such as Stilt Sandpiper, and reduced the Baird's Sandpiper flight to a shadow of the 1982 showing. Coverage of the 1984 Dead Creek drawdown was once again good and the weather cooperated in producing some very good fallouts, especially on 15 September.

The cone crop was as good as the rest of the wild food crop - this combined with excellent fruiting by yellow birch led to good numbers of many winter finches being reported. This was especially true of Pine Siskins, White-winged Crossbills, Purple Finches, and American Goldfinches. The crossbills were even detected nesting, after having failed to give confirmed breeding evidence to atlasers between 1976-81. The Pine Grosbeak, and, for the most part, the Common Redpoll were absent probably because of the wealth of food available north of Vermont in Canada.

Rarities of high quality numbered twelve. The best was the disoriented NORTHERN GANNET at Eden in late October. Other noteworthy ones included GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, SANDHILL CRANE, BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE, GYRFALCON, HUDSONIAN GODWIT, BUFF-BREASTED SAND-

PIPER, RED PHALAROPE, LITTLE GULL, CASPIAN TERN, CERULEAN WARBLER, and BLUE GROSBEAK. The total number of species reported this autumn was 237, excluding Ring-necked Pheasant. This report marks my tenth as editor. During the ten years I have been editor, a very impressive 292 species of birds have been reported to the Autumn Records of Vermont Birds.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS

There was a single report of the scarce Red-throated Loon, 3 were observed on the Connecticut River at Vernon on 10/27; this number dwindled to 1 by the next day (DUW,JJC). Common Loons were reported in smaller numbers than in the previous three autumns with a total of 85 recorded. The high count was 13 on 9/24 at Savage Island, Grand Isle (RBL). A bird grounded at Chester on 11/17 was banded and released on Lake Morey in Fairlee on the following day (VINS). A very good total of 157 Horned Grebes was reported, although this number was about half of last year's fallout-enhanced report. The earliest reported was on Lake Morey on 10/20 (WGE,NLM,TEJ, et al.); high counts were 28 on 11/16 in Addison and Panton (WGE,SJS), and 43 on 11/22 at Burlington (DLC). Others reported away from Lake Champlain included 3 on 10/28 at Vernon (JJC), 1 on 11/2 at Quechee (WGE), and 1 grounded in late November at Arlington (Mr. Grover, Fide NS). Reports of Red-necked Grebes numbered 6, and included 1 on 10/6 at Lake Morey (WGE), 5 on 10/16 at Burlington (WGE,NLM,JPM), 1 on 10/20-21 at Lake Morey (WGE,NLM,TEJ, et al.), 2 at Burlington on 10/21 (DLC,CJF), 1 on Caspian Lake, Greensboro 10/28 (DLC,PAT), and 1 at Addison on 11/4 (WGE,NLM). One wonders what crosses a farmer's mind when he discovers such an ungainly and bizarre bird as a juvenile NORTHERN GANNET stalking about his yard. One of the more unusual records of the season involved just these circumstances on 10/24; local birders released the bird on Lake Eden, but it eventually died. At last report the specimen was in the possession of game warden John Kapusta awaiting delivery to the Fairbanks Museum collection (fide RTS). The Double-crested Cormorant continues to increase on Lake Champlain; 332 were observed near Young Island in Grand Isle on 8/12 (RBL), RBL estimated at least 400 were present on the lake in the vicinity of Grand Isle in late summer. The last observed were 2 at the Shelburne Fishing Access on 10/13 (JDM). Just over 40 American Bitterns were reported with 35 of these recorded at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge in Swanton (MNWR hereafter) on 9/3 (JBG); the last reported was seen at Derby Bay, Derby on 10/19 (FAP). The Great Blue Heron was recorded in very good numbers at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area (DCWMA hereafter) during the area's management drawdown; the high count there was 65 on 8/14 (WGE). The species was recorded in average numbers elsewhere. Reports ended on 11/17 until the species reappeared for Christmas Counts in December. There were a good number of Great Egret reports; birds of this species were frequently observed at DCWMA and surrounding areas 8/11-9/2 with a maximum of 5 at Kreuger's Slang, Ferrisburg on 9/1-2 (BPG); 1 was seen at Marshfield Reservoir on 9/14 (GFE); the species was noted at MNWR from 9/15 to 28 with a high of 2 on 9/15 (JBG), and 1 was found at Vernon from 11/10-17 for what would appear to be the latest report of Great Egret for the state (JJC). As of 8/12 there were still 5 Snowy Egrets at Young Island, Grand Isle, where the species nested this past summer (RBL); the origin of 2 at Blodgett's Beach, Burlington on 8/18 (WAM) might possibly be traced to these birds. The only report of Cattle Egret this autumn was of a single juvenile on 9/16 at Ferrisburg (BPG). Up to 40 Green-backed Herons were reported at MNWR (max. on 8/31) (JBG), the species was reported in more modest numbers by others until 10/12 when three were observed at three locations in south central Rutland County

(CJF). Over 100 Black-crowned Night-Herons were reported. High counts were 40 on 8/20 at MNWR (JBG), and 28 on 9/2 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM). The last reported were 3 at DCWMA on 9/30 (WGE,NLM).

WATERFOWL

Very good but becoming less unexpected was the second late October hunter-bagged GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE for Vermont, noted during a bag inspection at MNWR on 10/21 (JBG). Unfortunately the report fails to indicate whether the bird originated from the east (i.e. Greenland, as have two of Vermont's other white-fronts) or the west. This constitutes at least the fourth report of this goose for Vermont. The Snow Goose migration this autumn was early and very large with over 7000 reported. A good flight was detected on the early dates of 9/30-10/1 involving a total of 1360 birds sighted with a maximum of 497 at Paine Mt., Northfield (WHB); an additional 700 were observed 10/2-3 bringing the four day total to over 2000 birds (29% of the grand total). Another 2300 were reported on 10/13 with 723 at Paine Mt. (WHB), and 885 in Shelburne and Colchester (JDM). Outside of these flights the high count was 1000+ on 11/11 at DCWMA (MBN). "Blue" phase geese reported included up to 6 or 7 at DCWMA from 10/8-11/16 (m.ob.), 2 over Timmouth on 10/13 (CJF), and "some" over Paine Mt. on 10/13 (WHB). There were more than the usual number of Brant reports including a large fallout on 10/27-28; 16 were noted at Lake Pineo in Quechee on 10/27 (WGE,NLM), and 100+ were seen on Lake Carmi, Franklin on 10/28 (PJM). Others reported included 1 at Young Island on 11/3 (RBL), and 1 at East Dorset during the third week of November (RuS, via NS). About 22,500 Canada Geese were reported, the best total yet submitted to the Autumn Records of Vermont Birds (RVB hereafter). Early transients of uncertain origin were 9 at Woodstock on 9/16 (JMN). The largest flights recorded included 5850 from 9/30-10/5 with peak days of 9/30 and 10/4, 2100+ on 10/10, and 1700 from 10/27-29. High counts from DCWMA, which include a potpourri of migrants, residents and staging birds, included 3000+ on 10/21 (DLC), and 3500 on 11/24 (MBN). Numbers of Wood Duck observed at MNWR were much higher this autumn than last, with the average count 1000/day versus 515/day in 1983. The high count at MNWR this autumn was an impressive 1600 on 10/8 (JBG). Over 300 other Wood Ducks were reported with a high count of 50 on 10/13 at Sand Bar Wildlife Management Area (JDM). The species was reported into late November. Green-winged Teal were reported in average numbers with 100/day at MNWR with a maximum of 200 on 10/8 (JBG), over 340 others were reported with a high count of 101 on 9/24 at DCWMA (WGE). A few Green-winged Teal were reported into winter. Numbers of American Black Duck and Mallard reported at MNWR were somewhat lower than in 1983, with black ducks averaging 1000/day in October and 1500/day in November, with high counts of 2000 on 10/8 and 11/10, and Mallards averaging 2500/day through October and November, with high counts of 3500 on 10/8 and 11/11 (JG). Other reports of black duck totalled about 1100 birds with a high of 190 on 11/18 at Lake Morey (WGE,NLM), while those of Mallard totalled about 1400 with a maximum of 388 at DCWMA on 10/8 (DLC). Northern Pintail averaged 50/day during October at MNWR with a peak count of 150 on 10/6, the November average count was 25/day (JBG). Others reported included 4 at DCWMA, Addison from 8/14-16 (WGE), 2 at HC on 9/21 (WJN), and 12 at DCWMA on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.). Blue-winged Teal averaged 150/day in October at MNWR, peaking at 350 on 10/8; numbers tailed off considerably by early November with 10/day (JBG). About 480 others were reported with a maximum of 200 at DCWMA on 8/29 (WAM); 30 at HC on 9/21 (WJN) represented a good total outside of the Champlain Valley; the last reported away from MNWR

were 2 at Hall's Creek Marsh in Derby on 10/20 (m.ob.). As usual the number of Northern Shovelers reported was small; 10/day were recorded at MNWR in October and November with a high of 50 on 11/1 (JBG). Others included 7 at DCWMA on 8/16 (WGE), and 9 there on 9/3 (WGE,NLM). One at HC on 9/12 (WJN) was a rare autumn sighting outside of the Champlain Valley. Numbers of Gadwall reported at MNWR increased from 10/day during October to 50/day in November with a maximum of 100 on 11/10 (JBG). Others included birds seen at the Burlington waterfront throughout the season beginning with the observation of a hen with 3 half grown young on 8/11 (WGE,NLM), and a high of 5 on 11/22 (DLC); 1 at HC 9/5-21 (WJN), 1 at Hartford on 10/8 (WGE,NLM), and 1 at Vernon on 10/31 (JJC). The American Wigeon population at MNWR also increased from October to November from 50/day to 100/day; high counts were 300 on 10/6 and 11/10 (JBG). Three other reports included 1 at Springweather Nature Area on 9/12 (WJN), 5 at Young Island, Grand Isle on 9/24 (RBL), and 5 on 10/19 at Lake Carmi (PJM). Reports of Canvasback were few: 2 were seen at Vernon on 11/17 (JJC), 5 at MNWR on 11/17 (JBG), and 1 was at HC on 11/27 (WJN). Numbers of Ring-necked Ducks were more modest at MNWR after last autumn's peak of 7700; the refuge population averaged 2500/day during the peak month of November with a single day maximum of 4000 on 11/10 (JBG). As usual, numbers reported elsewhere were very low with a total of just 23 observed from 9/16-11/30. Just 13 Greater Scaup were reported with an early record of 2 10/12-14 from Burlington (m.ob.), and a maximum of 7 on South Bay at Newport on 10/20 (WGE,NLM, et al.). Lesser Scaup averaged 15/day during November at MNWR with a high of 50 on 11/10 (JBG). Fifty-six others were reported 9/3-11/25 with high counts of 18 on 11/19 at Shoreham (ELW), and 16 at HC on 11/25 (WGE,NLM). Unidentified scaup reported included 65 on 11/4 at Lake Memphremagog (DLC,BLR). Reports of Oldsquaw commenced on 10/27 with 1 at Lake Morey (WGE,NLM); others reported were 3 at Shadow Lake, Glover 10/28 (DLC,PAT), 2 at Lake Carmi 10/29 (PJM), 1 at Kent Pond, Sherburne on 11/5 (PSA), 3 on 11/13 at Lake Morey (WGE), and 1 on 11/22 at Shelburne Bay (DLC). All of the scoters were well reported this autumn. Over 500 Black Scoters were recorded with about 370 noted during a major fallout on 10/28. The earliest reported were 35 at Thurman W. Dix Reservoir in Orange (TWDR hereafter) on 10/5 (MEF); high counts from 10/28 included 250 at Lake Willoughby, Westmore (DLC,PAT), and 120 at Vernon (JJC). The earliest Surf Scoters were 15 at Burlington on 10/6 (JDM), and 1 at Lake Morey from 10/6-14 (WGE,NLM). A total of 113 were reported; high counts included 49 on 10/8 at Burlington (DLC), and 24 on 10/28 at Lake Willoughby (DLC,PAT). Just over 100 White-winged Scoters were reported. Fourteen off Wings Point, Charlotte on 9/22 were the earliest reported (SRA); high counts were 24 on 10/28 at Vernon (JJC) and 16 on 10/29 at Burlington (WAM). The pattern of occurrence of the Common Goldeneye at MNWR is reversed in comparison with much of Vermont's other waters; as a nesting species there, it is more common early in the season than in November when the species is common elsewhere; 25/day were noted in October with a peak of 35 on 10/8; numbers tailed off to 5/day in November (JBG). About 800 other goldeneye were recorded. Reports from Shoreham and Fair Haven in early October may indicate nearby nesting. High counts included 200 on 11/18 at Burlington (WAM), the best in the Champlain Valley, and 27 at Lake Morey on 11/22 (WGE,NLM), the best count from the Connecticut Valley. A first for the autumn RVB was an adult male BARROW'S GOLDENEYE at Winooski River Delta (WRD hereafter) on 11/25 (JDM). Bufflehead arrived slightly late with 5 at Island Pond on 10/28 the earliest (DLC,PAT). The species arrived in November at MNWR averaging 10/day with a peak count of 25 on 11/17 (JBG). About 80

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-35- others were reported with a maximum of 50 on 11/18 at Burlington (WAM). Hooded Mergansers averaged 10/day at MNWR in October; the refuge population rose to an average of 25/day in November with a high count of 50 on 11/1 (JBG). About 95 others were reported from 9/5 through the end of November with a high count of 15-20 on 11/30 at Orwell (EPA). Over 1000 Common Mergansers were recorded. Reports commenced on 8/11 when 70 were observed on the Burlington waterfront including 8 half grown young (WGE,NLM). For the most part large numbers were not noted until November; late season counts included 150 at Shelburne Bay on 11/4 (WAM), 72 at Lake Pineo, Quechee on 11/14 (WGE), and 350 on 11/24 at Shoreham (ELW). Reports of Red-breasted Merganser included the following: 1 at Lake Morey on 10/21 (WGE,NLM), 1 at Vernon on 10/28 (JJC), 10 on 10/30 at MNWR (JBG), and 4 at Burlington on 11/19 (FAP). Ruddy Ducks were widely reported in small numbers; 5/day were noted in November at MNWR with a maximum of 10 on 11/10 (JBG), others included 1 male at Prouty Beach, Newport 10/19-20 (m.ob.), 4 at Vernon on 10/24 (JJC), 1 at Vernon on 10/28 (JJC), 2 at Lake Carmi on 10/29 (PJM), and 1 at Lake Bomoseen, Castleton on 10/30 (PSA).

VULTURES, HAWKS, AND FALCONS

The Turkey Vulture was reported in average numbers with 56 observed on hawk watches and an additional 75 reported by other observers. The best count submitted was 21 on 8/1 at Bristol (JRA), and the latest was observed at DCWMA on 11/4 (MBN). The numbers of Osprey reported remained stable with 119 on hawk watches representing an insignificant drop of 0.06 in per observer hour figures; over half of those on hawk watches were noted 9/10-16. About 45 other osprey were reported. The seasonal high count was 17 on 9/14 at Lincoln Hill, Starksboro (RE, et al.), and the last was observed at Lake Carmi on 11/10 (PJM). Reports of Bald Eagles included an imm. at DCWMA on 8/20 (BPG), an imm. bearing a yellow patagial tag indicating release in upstate New York at MNWR on 9/8 (JBG), 1 at Wallingford on 9/8 (PB), 1 at South Barre on 9/17 (SJSO), and an imm. at MNWR on 9/20 (JBG). Northern Harriers were reported in good numbers; 82 were observed on hawk watches and a further 76 were in other situations; high counts included three counts of 8 each, on dates ranging from 8/26-9/30 at DCWMA (m. ob.), and 8 on 10/16 at Lincoln Hill (MPB). Sharp-shinned Hawks reported on hawk watches totalled 614, representing a per observer hour rate of 0.66, down 0.17 from 1983. The best counts submitted were 49 on 10/14 at Paine Mt. (WHB), and a fine count of 76 at Gile Mt., Norwich on 10/15 (DaC) submitted too late for inclusion in the hawk watch totals. Cooper's Hawks were reported in every month of the season, with 23 sighted by hawkwatchers (0.02/observer hr., stable), and 8 recorded by others. Seventeen Northern Goshawks were reported from hawk watches (0.01 per observer hr.), and 12 were observed by other observers. There were 41 Red-shouldered Hawks observed by hawkwatchers (0.04/observer hr.) with 8 others reported; the latest report of the season was for 11/7 at Paine Mt. (WHB). Numbers of Broad-winged Hawks rebounded to about average numbers after last autumn's (1983) dismal total of 371; 1995 were recorded from hawk watches accounting for 51% of all migrant hawks. Migration was first evident in late August with a few migrating over Spencer's Cabin, Winhall, as early as 8/21 (WJN); 1166 were observed 9/10-16 indicating the peak flight period. High counts included 401 at Grafton on 9/9 (DC), and 281 on 9/12 at Westford (MJM). The last were 2 on 10/7 at Gile Mt. (WGE,NLM). A single rehabilitated Broad-wing was banded and released at Woodstock on 8/27 (VINS). The Red-tailed Hawk was second in abundance among Buteos to the broad-wing with a total of 465 reported by hawkwatchers. High

counts were from late October with 51 at Gile Mt. on 10/25 (DaC) (this number was not included in hawkwatch totals), and 44 on 10/31 at Fuller Mt., Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). The remains of a Red-tail banded in northern New Jersey in November 1981 were recovered in Pawlet in September (VD). Rough-legged Hawks were relatively scarce even at reliable sites. Four were reported from hawk watches. Reports included 1 on 10/14 at Shoreham (ELW), 1 at Paine Mt. on 10/24 (WHB), 1 at Brandon Gap on 10/28 (RWP), 2 at Spencer's Cabin on 11/3 (WJN). Birds at DCWMA were first noted in mid-November with a high count of 5 on 11/24 (WAM), 1 was at New Haven on 11/2 (JRA), and 1 was seen at Shoreham on 11/7 (ELW). An immature Eagle sp., believed by the observers to be a Golden, was sighted 8/27 at Brilyea Access DCWMA (SSW,EBB,JOB). Four GOLDEN EAGLES were reported from hawk watches including 1 ad. on 10/5 at Spencer's Cabin (WJN), 1 imm. at Lincoln Hill on 10/16 (MPB), and 2 imms. at Lincoln Hill on 10/30 (MPB). Numbers of American Kestrels detected on hawk watches rebounded to comparable levels to those counted in 1981 and 1982 at 205, although per observer hour figures remained lower, 0.22 versus 0.32 and 0.33 in '81 and '82. High counts included 25 on 8/19 at DCWMA (DLC,BLR), and 54 on 9/12 at Westford (MJM). Numbers seemed low to many observers especially later in the season. A total of 9 Merlin were reported from 9/2-26 with five observed on hawk watches and two reported through VINS' rehabilitation program. Young Peregrine Falcons were present at DCWMA from at least 8/4-10/10 their presence being attributable apparently to releases by the Peregrine Fund and its associated agencies; numbers of these birds peaked in mid-Sept. when up to 4 were observed. Other Peregrines reported included an imm. at Burlington on 8/5 (GF), 1 on 9/15 at MNWR (JBG), 1 at Paine Mt. on 9/16 (WHB), 2 at Mt. Philo on 9/21 (AP), 1 at Spencer's Cabin on 9/22 (WJN), 1 at Dorset on 10/13 (SBL,JDL), 1 on 10/15 at Paine Mt. (WHB), and 1 ad. at Newport on 10/20 (WGE, NLM, et al.). The autumn RVB's first GYRFALCON, an adult, was superbly photographed at DCWMA on 11/25 (TAR).

GAMEBIRDS THROUGH CRANE

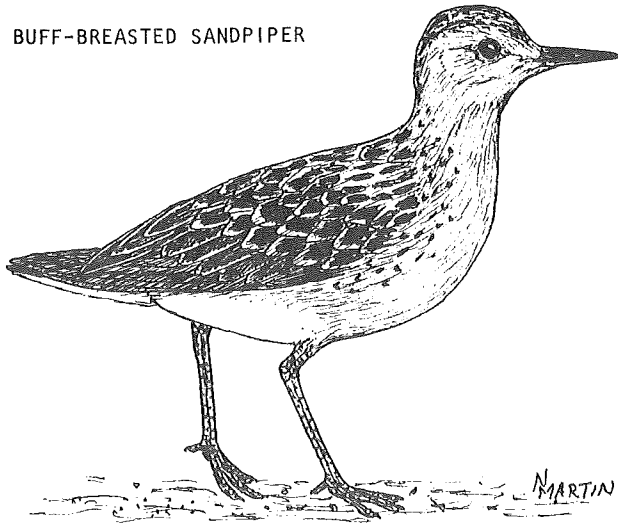
Ruffed Grouse were reported in low numbers. C.J. Frankiewicz's comments illustrate the experience of most of our active observers, "... covers that held 10-25 birds two years ago held none this year. Poor snow cover (crust) and May-June rains hurt badly." Drumming grouse were reported in September and November. A few Ring-necked Pheasant were released near Woodstock at some time during the summer as was indicated by two August reports from Pomfret and Barnard; a bird observed during October at West Haven may have emigrated from New York State where the Dept. of Environmental Conservation still stocks this bird which cannot tolerate our climate. There were several scattered reports of Wild Turkey some of them beyond the established limits of the species' distribution (see The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Vermont pp. 94-95). Whether this represents wandering, or Fish and Wildlife attempts to establish turkeys in these areas, is not clear. The furthest afield of the turkeys reported were at Albany (TP), and Barnett Center (PD, fide FM). The estimated peak Virginia Rail population at MNWR was 50 on 8/31 (JBG), five others were reported from 8/4 to 10/14, the latest at Timmouth (CJF). The only report of Sora was from MNWR where the maximum population was estimated at 50 on 8/31 (JBG). There were only three reports of Common Moorhen. One adult and 3 juveniles were seen at DCWMA from 8/14-26 (WGE,NLM), 7 were observed along South Slang in Ferrisburg on 8/27 (JID,MCD), and 1 was noted at WRD from 9/22-29 (JDM). As usual a few American Coot were present in the marshes of MNWR with 10/day estimated during October and November, and peak counts of 25 on

-36- 10/18 and 11/14 (JBG). Other coots reported included 3 at HC on 10/9 (JJC), and 1 at Vernon on 10/28 (JJC). An exciting find was the ad. SANDHILL CRANE observed in a pasture at the Groton/Ryegate townline on 9/19 (JMB), for a ninth state record.

WADERS

Over 150 Black-bellied Plovers were reported. The earliest was found at DCWMA on 8/25-26 (CJF). The high count was 27 on 9/30 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM). This species was among the birds involved in the 10/26-28 waterbird fallout, with a count of 9 in the Burlington area on 10/27 (JDM), and rare Connecticut Valley sightings at HC on 10/26 (WGE) and Brattleboro's Retreat Meadows on 10/28 (JJC). The species was also observed on Lake Memphremagog on 10/20 and 11/4. A count of 7 on 11/7 at Burlington was good for such a date (SRA), and the latest was seen at DCWMA, Panton on 11/16 (WGE,SJS). About 140 Lesser Golden-Plovers were reported. The earliest was at DCWMA on 8/19 (DLC). Small to medium sized flocks were reported from the fourth week of August to the second week of October with a high count of 50 on 9/15 at DCWMA, Panton (WGE,NLM, et al.). The species is rare outside of the Champlain Valley so three reports of single birds, perhaps the same bird, from HC 10/2-10 were good (WJN, WGE). The latest was a bird with a leg injury at WRD 11/8-10 (SRA,JDM). The Semipalmated Plover was first reported in July, with reports continuing into autumn totalling about 70 birds. High counts were from mid-August and included 20 at DCWMA on 8/16 (JID,MCD), and 19 on 8/21 at DCWMA (DLC). The last was at DCWMA on 10/7 (DLC). About 930 Killdeer were reported. High counts included 100+ at DCWMA on 9/16 (WAM), and 88 on 9/24 at DCWMA (WGE); the last was at Burlington on 11/11 (WGE,NLM). Greater Yellowlegs reported totalled about 260. High counts included 57 on 9/6 at DCWMA (DLC), 25 at MNWR on 9/15 (JBG), and 50 at DCWMA on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.). A count of 10 on 10/26 at HC was good for the Connecticut Valley (WGE). Late reports were 1 at MNWR (JBG), and 1 at TWDR (FAP) on 11/3, and 1 at Shelburne on 11/4 (WAM). Numbers of the Lesser Yellowlegs reported were impressive, especially at DCWMA, with about 900 observed. Peak counts were 170 on 8/14 at DCWMA (WGE), and 135 on 9/3 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM). The last was very tardy on 11/4 at Shelburne (WAM). Solitary Sandpipers numbered about 40. High counts were modest, 5 on 8/4 at DCWMA (WGE, NLM), and 4 at TWDR on 8/27 (MFM). The last was observed at Timmouth on 10/10 (CJF). About 100 Spotted Sandpipers were reported; the maximum was 30 on 8/30 at MNWR (JBG), and the last was at Shoreham on 10/11 (ELW). There were four reports of Upland Sandpiper: 13 were at DCWMA on 8/4 (WGE,NLM), 4 were observed in Ferrisburg on 8/11 (WGE,NLM), 1 was at Cornwall on 8/14 (ELW), and 10 were at MNWR on 9/1 (JBG). It appears likely that the WHIMBREL is a scarce but regular autumn migrant to Vermont. There have now been a total of 7 reports of Whimbrel to RVB, 6 for the autumn migration period, including this autumn's bird observed at Burlington on 9/1 (DLC). Unprecedented were up to 20 HUDSONIAN GODWITS seen at DCWMA on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.), at least one of these birds stayed to 9/17 (DLC,TL,BPG); in addition, 3 were observed at DCWMA, Panton on 9/30 (WGE,NLM). At least 15 Ruddy Turnstones were reported. The earliest was at Burlington on 8/11 (WGE,NLM). Other reports included 1 at DCWMA (where the species is rare even during drawdowns) on 8/19 (DLC,BLR, et al.), a good count of 6 on 9/9 at the Charlotte Town Beach (DLC), 3 at Burlington, the maximum there, on 9/17 (WAM), and 1 with an injury observed on 10/20 at Burlington (JDM). There were four reports of the scarce Red Knot. Up to 3 were at Burlington from 8/24-25 (DLC); 2 were at DCWMA, Panton on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.); 1 was at Burlington on 9/25 (SRA); and apparently unprecedented

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER



-37- DCWMA, Addison on 9/8 (ELW,LW), and 2 were at DCWMA, Addison on 9/9 (WGE,NLM). Very rare, but never unreported during a DCWMA drawdown was the BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER at the Stone Dam Access in Panton on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.). Ten Short-billed Dowitchers were reported. No numbers greater than three were observed. Late by Vermont standards were dowitchers reported as Short-billed at WRD on 9/8 (CJF), and DCWMA on 9/16 (DLC,WAM). Early was a Long-billed Dowitcher reported from WRD 8/26 (DLC,BLR). Other Long-billed Dowitcher reports accompanied with details included 1 juvenile on 9/9 at DCWMA, Addison (WGE,NLM), 5 juveniles at DCWMA, Addison on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.), and a juvenile and basic plumaged bird at DCWMA, Addison on 9/24 (WGE). Unidentified dowitcher included 6 on 9/9 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and a late bird, very likely a long-bill at MNWR on 11/3 (JBG). Considering how little we know as yet about the seasonality of our two very similar dowitcher species, this editor would find a few explanatory details regarding how the identification was made helpful for unseasonable dowitcher reports (after August for Short-bills and before Sept. for Long-bills). About 50 Common Snipe were reported. The high count was 9 on 10/21 at Shelburne (DLC,CJF). Snipe were reported into November. Up to 150 were recorded at MNWR during late July (JBG), presumably such numbers continued into August. About three dozen American Woodcock were reported. High counts included 6 on 9/8 and 22 at New Haven Jct. (JRA), and 6 on 9/29 and 10/7 at Timmouth (CJF). The last was at Timmouth on 11/12 (CJF)-"still less than other years" (CJF). There were reports of all three phalaropes. This included two reports of Wilson's Phalarope from DCWMA, Addison, 2 from 8/14-16 (WGE, et al.), and 1 on 8/19 (DLC,BLR,CJF) perhaps one of the same birds. Red-necked Phalarope reports included the following: 1 8/18-23, 2 on 8/20 at Burlington (WAM), 6 on 8/19 at DCWMA (DLC,BLR,CJF), 1 at DCWMA on 8/22 (BPG), and 1 on 9/9 at DCWMA (DLC, WAM). Very early and in a rarely observed plumage was a juvenile RED PHALAROPE at DCWMA, Panton on 8/26 (WGE, NLM).

GULLS AND TERNS

as to date and location were 2 on 10/28 at Newport (DLC,PAT). Just over 40 Sanderlings were reported. The first observed were 2 at Burlington on 8/11 (WGE, NLM). The first of a good number of reports from DCWMA, where the species is normally rare, was for 1 on 8/18 (JRA). High counts included 7 at DCWMA on 9/3 (WGE,NLM), and 10 at Burlington on 9/25 (SRA). The last were 2 at Newport on 10/20 (WGE,NLM, et al.). About 1140 Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported, most of them at DCWMA. The high count was 270 on 9/3 at DCWMA (WGE, NLM). Late birds included 5 at DCWMA on 10/12 (WJN) a good count for October, and a very tardy bird at WRD on 10/27 (JDM). Two Western Sandpipers were heard uttering their distinctive flight calls on 10/12 at DCWMA (WJN). Over 630 Least Sandpipers were reported. High counts were 30 on 8/12 at WRD (WAM), 25 at MNWR on 9/1 (JBG), and 130 on 9/3 at DCWMA (WGE, NLM). The last was seen at WRD on 10/6 (JDM). Twenty-three White-rumped Sandpipers was a good total for this uncommon species. Early reports included 1 at the Springfield Meadows on 8/8 (WJN) (this wader is very rare in the Connecticut Valley), and an adult at DCWMA on 8/16 (WGE). The species is also rare in north-central Vermont so 1 at Hardwick Lake on 8/28 (FO) was good. High counts were 7 on 9/9 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and 6 on 10/27 at WRD (JDM). The last was observed at Burlington on 11/14 (DLC). There were four reports of the scarce Baird's Sandpiper. A juvenile was seen at DCWMA, Panton on 8/11 (WGE,NLM), 1 was observed at St. Albans Bay on 8/26 (DLC,BLR), a juvenile was at DCWMA, Panton on 9/30 (WGE,NLM), and 10 were recorded at DCWMA on 10/12 (WJN). Over 550 Pectoral Sandpipers were reported, most at DCWMA. The high count there was 111 on 10/8 (DLC). Reports outside of the Champlain Valley included 1 at Stowe on 8/24 (MF), an unspecified number at Hardwick Lake on 8/28 (FO), 1 at HC on 10/17 (WGE), and 2 at Derby Bay on 10/20 (FAP). The latest reported were 4 at Burlington on 10/30 (DLC). The drawdown at DCWMA and dry lake conditions late into the season contributed to a very large total of 430 Dunlin being reported. The earliest was at WRD on 9/3 (DLC). High counts included 170 at DCWMA on 10/8 (DLC), 110 at WRD on 10/27 (JDM), and 49 at Newport on 10/28 (DLC,PAT) an unprecedented number outside of the Champlain Valley. Also indicative of the 10/26-28 waterbird fallout were 6 at HC on 10/26 (WGE); there are very few Connecticut Valley reports of this wader. The last report of this season (but see winter records) was of 1 at McCuen Slang, Addison on 11/16 (WGE,SJS). There were four reports of the rare Stilt Sandpiper a few of which may involve an overlap of individuals. Three were observed at DCWMA, Addison 8/14-16 (WGE, et al.), 2 were at DCWMA, Panton on 8/31 (WGE), 1 was observed at

A LITTLE GULL upheld the tradition of the Tri-town Water District intake plant in Addison on 9/9 (WGE, NLM). This is the first report for Vermont since January of 1980 when 2 were seen at the same location which has now hosted 3 of Vermont's 5 records. Bona-partre's Gulls were reported in excellent numbers. A total of about 1060 were recorded by observers throughout the season. High counts included 35 at Newport on 10/20 (WGE,NLM, et al.), 283 in the Burlington area on 10/20 (JDM), and 219 in Shelburne Bay on 10/30 (DLC). The Ring-billed Gull was reported in abundance in the Champlain Valley and reported at scattered locations in other parts of the state, largely in small numbers. The highest count reported was 1200 at Shoreham on 11/14 (ELW). The Herring Gull was reported throughout the season. The species was common in the Champlain Valley and more numerous than the Ring-bill away from there. The best counts recorded were 260 in the Burlington area on 11/11 (WGE, NLM), and 70+ at HC on 11/25 (WGE,NLM). About 90 Great Black-backed Gulls were reported. The high count was 31 on 11/25 at Burlington (WAM), and the species was recorded at Lake Morey and Brattleboro in addition to the Champlain Valley. A CASPIAN TERN at DCWMA, Addison on 9/17 (TL,BPG, et al.), was the first for the autumn RVB and only the third reported to RVB. Seventy-seven Common Terns were reported. High counts were 55 on 8/15 at MNWR (JBG), and 12 on 8/30 at WRD (FAP). The last were 2 at WRD on 9/15 (WGE,NLM, et al.). Reports of Black Terns were limited to two, 9 were at WRD 8/4-12 (m.ob.), and 1 was at DCWMA from 8/26-30 (JID,MCD,DLC).

DOVES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

The lack of commentary upon Rock Doves is taken as an indication of the continued vigor of Vermont's feral population. The Mourning Dove is also doing quite well. Fledglings were observed at Lake Carmi on 8/2 (PJM). The maximum reported was 60 on 10/30 at Woodstock (WGE). One was banded at Hartford (VINS). Reports of Black-billed Cuckoos were few and far between; in Woodstock, J. Nicholson missed the species for the first time in a decade. Reports included 1 throughout August at Shrewsbury, last seen 8/30 (LPS); 1 on 8/14 at Winhall (WJN); 1 from 8/6-21 at Lincoln (JRA); and 1 banded at Woodstock on 9/13 (VINS). The only report of Eastern Screech-Owl was from MNWR where 2 was the maximum on 8/20 (JBG). Eighteen Great Horned Owls were reported. The high count at MNWR was 6 on 8/15 (JBG). Barred Owls totalled 16; the peak count at MNWR was 5 on 8/15 (JBG). Short-eared Owl reports include the following: the last of a series of reports of a nesting pair at North Hero on 8/3 (JJA et al.;RBL), and 1 at DCWMA, Panton on 11/16 (WGE, SJS). Two reports of Northern Saw-whet Owl included 1 banded at Marshfield Pond on 10/13 (MFM), and 1 at Barnard on 11/10 which was subsequently found dead and brought to VINS (TC). About 90 Common Nighthawks were reported. The best counts were 40+ at Quechee on 8/29 (JMN), and 20 on 8/30 at Ludlow (PB). The latest were 2 at Moretown on 9/10 (FAP).

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The great majority of the 180 Chimney Swifts reported were noted during August. High counts were 25 on 8/11 at Rutland (LPS), and 100+ at Woodstock on 8/17 (WGE, NLM). The last was at Mt. Philo on 9/17 (JID,MCD). Over fifty Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were reported. A nest at Shoreham fledged two young on 8/27 and 28 respectively (BBB). Eleven hummers were recorded on hawk watches including 8 at Paine Mt. (WHB). Late dates for most observers were from 9/12-16; a hummer on 10/4 at Shoreham was most likely a late ruby-throat (ELW). The Belted Kingfisher was widely reported in average numbers throughout the season. High counts were 11 along the Ottauquechee River between Woodstock and Quechee on 8/5 (JMN), and 9 at WRD on 8/11 (WAM). The only Red-headed Woodpecker reported was at Springweather Nature Area on 8/16 (WJN). About three dozen Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were recorded. The maximum was 8 on 8/18 at Reading (FMH,GEH). Nine were banded, 7 at Marshfield (MFM, VINS). The last reported were 2 at HC on 10/2 (WGE). Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were reported in essentially equivalent numbers; both species chose to do most of their foraging in the woods as feeder observers seldom noted them. The single Black-backed Woodpecker report comes from the well-known haunt of Ferdinand on 9/12 (MFM). About 120 Northern Flickers were reported. Most high counts were from late September, the largest of them including 10 on 8/27 at Springweather Nature Area (WJN), 10 at Reading on 9/25 (FMH), and 9 at HC on 10/2 (WGE). Three were banded at Ferdinand (MFM). The species was reported well into November. Over 40 Pileated Woodpeckers were reported including a maximum of 5 on 10/26 at HC (WGE).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Eleven of the thirteen Olive-sided Flycatchers reported were observed during August. The last was sighted at Woodstock on 9/11 (WGE,NLM). Approximately three dozen Eastern Wood-Pewees were reported. The high count was 6 on 8/24 at Reading (FMH,GEH), and the last reported were 1 at Shoreham (ELW) and 1 at Gile Mt., Norwich (WGE, DaC) on 9/22. Four pewees were banded, 2 at Marshfield and 2 at Woodstock (MFM, VINS). There were reports of 19 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers. The best count was 3 at S. Duxbury on 8/20 (FAP), and

the latest was at Shoreham on 9/17 (ELW). Six were banded, 2 each at Ferdinand, Marshfield and Woodstock (MFM, VINS). Records of singing Alder Flycatchers included at least 2 at Quechee on 8/5 (JMN), and 3 near Taftsville from 8/6-10 (WGE). The voice of the Willow Flycatcher was heard at Weybridge to 8/31 (MBN). Eight "Traill's" flycatchers were banded, 6 of them at Woodstock with the last on 8/30 (VINS, MFM). Considering the difficulties involved in identifying small flycatchers it is not surprising that 24 of the 38 Least Flycatchers reported were banded, 14 at Woodstock (VINS, MFM). Over 12 were vocal enough on 8/5 between Woodstock and Quechee to provide the high count (JMN), and the last reported were 1 at Woodstock on 9/18 (VINS), and 1 at Shoreham on 9/19 (ELW). Sixty-five Eastern Phoebes were reported. The maximum was 7 on 9/28 at Woodstock (JMN), and the last were 2 at Brownsville on 10/22 (BMH). Six were banded, 5 at Woodstock a low total for VINS (VINS, MFM). Of 24 Great Crested Flycatchers reported 20 were noted during August. Several observers reported up to three in a day and the latest was at Shoreham on 9/21 (ELW) extending the autumn RVB late date by two days. Over 120 Eastern Kingbirds were noted. The high count was 29 on 8/4 at DCWMA (WGE, NLM), and the last was at Winhall on 9/17 (WJN). Good numbers of Horned Larks were reported although the species was still noted by relatively few observers. Larks were reported throughout the season with the largest numbers during late October and November. The largest count submitted was 211 at DCWMA on 10/21 (DLC). The Purple Martin was reported in good numbers and it did not linger beyond August. The peak count was 83 at Shelburne Bay on 8/11 (WGE, NLM), and the last observed were 3 at St. Albans Bay on 8/26 (DLC, BLR). One at HC on 8/21 (WJN) represents the first eastern Vermont report for the Autumn RVB. Tree Swallows were especially numerous at DCWMA because of drawdown conditions. The maximum of 750 on 9/9 (FAP), and late report of 10/8 when 11 were observed (DLC), were both from DCWMA. As usual there was a handful of August reports of Northern Rough-winged Swallows. One was at Winhall on 8/3 (WJN), 10+ were noted at Lake Carmi on 8/8 (PJM), 1 was at Shelburne Bay on 8/11 (WGE, NLM), and 20 were at DCWMA on 8/19 (DLC). Over 260 Bank Swallows were reported. The high count was 100+ at DCWMA on 8/19 (DLC). The last was at DCWMA on 9/30 (WGE, NLM) over ten days later than any previous report to RVB. Cliff Swallows were also best-reported at DCWMA. The seasonal maximum of 53 was recorded on 8/19 at DCWMA (DLC), and 4 on 9/30 at DCWMA (WGE, NLM) exceeded by a few days the previous autumn RVB late date. Barn Swallows were reported in more modest numbers than other swallows with a maximum of just 65 at DCWMA on 9/3 (WGE, NLM). Barn Swallow reports continued into October for the third straight year with 1 at DCWMA on 10/12 (WJN).

JAYS THROUGH WRENS

The single Gray Jay report was from Ferdinand where 5 were observed, including 2 banded, on 9/14 (MFM). Over 660 Blue Jays were reported. The annual migration of, presumably, young birds typically peaked in late September but counts were lower than average, apparently reflecting less emigration from the north country than in most years. High counts included 43 on 9/27 at Paine Mt., Northfield (WHB), and 34 at the Deer Leap, Bristol on 9/30 (DLC). Eleven Blue Jays were banded, 6 at Marshfield (MFM, VINS). Counts of migratory American Crows peaked during the last week of October. The peak flight in the Champlain Valley occurred from 10/22-23 with counts of 3000 at N. Ferrisburg on 10/22 (JID, MCD), and 1000 at DCWMA on 10/23 (WGE). The largest flight in eastern Vermont appeared to be 10/28-29 with a high count of 903 on 10/29 at Paine Mt. (WHB). One hundreded sixty-five Common Ra-

vens were reported. High counts were 16 at Putney Mt. on 9/16 (ABM), 21 at the Deer Leap, Bristol on 9/22 (DLC), and 17 at Gile Mt., Norwich on 10/11 (WGE). Most were reported in mountainous parts of Vermont but one was observed at Shoreham on 10/4 (ELW). Black-capped Chickadees elicited much comment from feeder-watchers who observed smaller than usual numbers; however, the species seemed numerous enough in woodlands. High counts from active observers confirm this pattern with reports of 32 on 8/19 at S. Duxbury (FAP), 25 at Reading on 8/30 (FMH,GEH), and 45 in Quechee and Hartland on 11/1 (WGE). Little migratory movement was evident for chickadees. Just 38 were banded, 19 by each reporting bander (MFM,VINS). This lack of migrants was especially evident at Woodstock where the 19 banded was considered low, but the 17 birds recaptured were considered a normal number. Fledglings at Shrewsbury on 8/12 (LPS) were two days later than the latest date recorded in the newly published Vermont Atlas. Boreal Chickadees were only encountered in the Northeast Kingdom. The species was reported throughout the season east of Island Pond, with a high count of 14 on 8/5 at Moose Bog (WGE,NLM); 2 were noted season-long at S. Albany (TP), and up to 3 were observed during the season at Sheffield (PEW). Twenty-two Tufted Titmouses were reported. Successful nestings were recorded at W. Brattleboro (fledglings first seen 7/29) (JJC), and Hartford (GFE, et al.). Two were banded at Hartford (VINS). Titmouses were recorded north to Colchester and Hartford. Nearly 90 Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported. They remained in evergreen-dominated habitats for the most part. High counts were 10 on 9/20 and 10/13 at Reading (FMH,GEH). Six were banded at Marshfield (MFM). About 80 White-breasted Nuthatches were reported. One was banded at Plainfield (MFM). Over 65 Brown Creepers were recorded. The high count was an impressive 20 at Shad Island, MNWR on 10/11 (JBG) apparently a concentration of migrants. One was banded at Ferdinand (MFM). Numbers of the House Wren seem to have been low with only 22 reported. High counts were in the range of three to four, and the last was at Shoreham on 10/14 (ELW). The population of the Winter Wren seems to have recovered considerably from the low level it reached in the late 1970s. Forty-two were reported, most in late September and early October. The high count was 10 on 9/29 at Reading (FMH,GEH). Four were banded, 2 at Marshfield and 2 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). See the 1984-85 Winter RVB for early winter records. Less than 20 Marsh Wrens were reported. Up to 4 were reported in western Vermont marshes during August. One in a cornfield in Woodstock on 10/3 (WGE) was in a part of the state where this wren is scarce. The last reported was at DCWMA on 10/23 (WGE).

KINGLETS THROUGH THRUSHES

Over 130 Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported. The species was not numerous as a migrant and its numbers remained fairly constant at Moose Bog, Ferdinand throughout the season with 20 on 8/5 and 17 on 11/4. The best count was 25+ at WRD on 9/29 (JDM). Two were banded at Marshfield (MFM). Numbers of Ruby-crowned Kinglets reported totalled 114. Early migrants were detected on 8/25 at W. Brattleboro (JJC) and Shoreham (ELW). The migration peaked in early to mid-October with high counts of 9 at Woodstock on 10/1 (JMN), and 10 at Reading on 10/10 (FMH,GEH). Fourteen were banded at three locations with 7 netted at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The last reported was at WRD on 11/11 (WGE,NLM). A total of 12 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers was reported. All but two of the reports were from the Champlain Valley. The high count was 4 on 8/20 at Lewis Creek, Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). One at S. Duxbury on 8/19 was new for that Green Mt. location (FAP). Late reports included 1 at W. Brattleboro on 9/8

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(JJC), and 2 at Shoreham on 9/26 (ELW) very late for this early departing species. Just under 100 Eastern Bluebirds were reported. High counts were modest with 8 at Rockingham on 10/9 (JJC), 8 at Woodstock on 10/12 (WGE,NLM), and 7 at N. Ferrisburg on 10/21 (DLC). No fall bluebirds were reported after October but see the 1984-85 winter RVB. The Veery, which departs Vermont largely during August, was reported in only small numbers. Up to 5 were reported on a given date. Seven were banded at 3 sites with 3 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The last was banded at Woodstock on 9/18 (VINS). Six Gray-cheeked Thrushes were reported. One was observed at Winhall on 8/14 (WJN), 1 was found on Camels Hump on 9/21 (JID,MCD), 1 was at Winhall on 9/24 (WJN), 1 was banded at Woodstock on 9/27 (VINS), 1 was banded at Marshfield (MFM), and the last was observed at Winhall on 10/3 (WJN). Numbers of Swainson's Thrushes reported continue to decline from the very large numbers reported during the mid-1970's; a little over 40 were reported this autumn. The high count was 7 on 9/23 at Woodstock (JMN). Fourteen were banded, 7 at Ferdinand (MFM,VINS). The last was at Winhall on 10/23 (WJN), which is about a week later than normal. In contrast to the other "spotted thrushes" the Hermit Thrush was reported in good numbers. Over 120 were noted with a clear peak late in the third week of October. High counts included 10 at Reading on 10/18 (FMH,GEH), 13 at Woodstock on 10/18 (WGE), and 11 banded at Woodstock on 10/19 (VINS). Forty-two were banded with 20 ringed at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). Late birds included 1 at Reading (FMH,GEH), and 1 at Winhall (WJN) on 10/29. Two dozen Wood Thrushes were reported. High counts did not exceed four and the latest were 2 at Hartford on 9/30 (WGE,NLM). Two Wood Thrushes were banded (MFM,VINS). The American Robin was reported throughout the season. The largest numbers reported were from the fourth week of October including the maximum of 205 on 10/25 at Camels Hump (DLC). Robins were more numerous than is average, well into November in the Champlain Valley. Five robins were banded, 3 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS).

MIMICS THROUGH VIREOS

About 130 Gray Catbirds were reported. High counts included 10 on 9/5 at HC (WJN), and 9 at Shoreham on 9/6 (ELW). The last reported during this season was at Weybridge on 10/24 (MBN). Thirty-two of 34 banded were at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). Numbers of Northern Mockingbirds reported remained lower than totals reported during the first couple of years of the 80s (average 16.3 1980-82). Seven were reported north to Colchester and Lyndon Center. Only 12 Brown Thrashers were reported. One was banded at Woodstock (VINS), and the latest was at Shrewsbury on 10/12 (LPS). Often easily overlooked, the Water Pipit was reported in good numbers. About 470 were reported. The earliest reported were 1 at WRD on 9/8 (JDM,DLC,CJP), and 2 at DCWMA on 9/9 (FAP). The high count of 66 at DCWMA on 9/30 (WGE,NLM) included a flock of 36 which were observed arrayed on the branches of an elm tree, instead of their usual location on the ground. The latest report to the Fall Records were 16 at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro on 11/17 (JJC), (but see the winter 1984-85 RVB for a later report). About 1250 Cedar Waxwings were reported throughout the season. Waxwings were in evidence over a wider geographic area, late in the season, this year than is normal with late November reports from such places as S. Duxbury and Clarendon. High counts included 100 at Reading on 9/26 (FMH,GEH), 300 at HC on 10/15 (WJN), and 130 at Panton on 11/16 (WGE,SJS). Eighteen were banded with 15 netted at Marshfield and 3 caught at Ferdinand (MFM). Northern Shrikes proved scarce. Reports included 1 at Paine Mt., Northfield on 10/15 (WHB), 1 singing ad. male at Lake Morey, Fairlee on 10/27 (WGE,NLM), and an ad. feeding on grasshoppers in

Sherburne on 11/2 (WGE). The European Starling population continues on in health, as illustrated by these selected counts: 5000+ at DCWMA on 9/27 (JID,MCD), 800+ at HC on 10/17 (WGE), and 1100 at Newport on 10/28 (DLC,PAT). Twenty-six Solitary Vireos were reported. The maximum report was 4 on 9/20 (FMH,GEH). Late reports included 1 on 10/18 at Shoreham (ELW), and 1 banded at Woodstock on 10/19 (VINS). Eight were banded, 6 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). A handful of Yellow-throated Vireos were reported. The last were 3 at Woodstock on 9/14 (JMN). Eighteen Warbling Vireos were recorded. Most observers recorded their last during the second week of September; the latest was located on 9/24 at W. Brattleboro (JJC). The uncommon Philadelphia Vireo was reported 9 times from 9/1 to 9/28, the last at Shrewsbury (LPS). One was banded at Ferdinand and another was banded at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The total of 63 Red-eyed Vireos was lower than average. The best count was 8 on 8/19 at S. Duxbury (FAP). Sixteen were banded, 12 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The last reported was at Shoreham on 10/6 (ELW).

WOOD WARBLERS

A Golden-winged Warbler was observed at W. Brattleboro on 9/1 (JJC), seven days later than any previous report of this scarce autumn migrant to the autumn RVB. Just over 100 Tennessee Warblers were reported, only half of the 1983 total of this common migrant. As usual, high counts spanned a wide range of dates including 12 on 8/21 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 12 at W. Brattleboro on 9/21 (JJC). Seven of the 14 banded at three locations were netted at Woodstock (MFM,VINS); the banding total is especially low for this species. The latest reported was found at Hartford on 10/8 (NLM). A single Orange-crowned Warbler was observed at Winhall on 9/15 (WJN). The total of 92 Nashville Warblers reported was lower than in any recent autumn. The 39 banded, 22 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS) was half of last year's total. The maximum was 10 on 8/21 at S. Duxbury (FAP). The latest were 1 at Woodstock (WGE,NLM), 2 at Shoreham (ELW), and 1 at S. Duxbury (FAP) on 10/4. Only 7 Northern Parulas were reported. Two were banded at Marshfield and Ferdinand (MFM), 1 was at Winhall on 8/22 (WJN), 2 were sighted at WRD on 9/22 (JDM), 1 was noted at Winhall on 9/25 (WJN), and 1 was found at HC on 10/2 (WGE). Just over 60 Yellow Warblers were reported. High counts were from early to mid-August including 16 at MNWR on 8/5 (JJC), and 15 at WRD on 8/11 (WGE,NLM). Two were banded at Marshfield and Woodstock (MFM,VINS). One observed at N. Hartland Dam on 11/1 was extraordinarily late (WGE). Forty Chestnut-sided Warblers were cited by observers. High counts were 5 on 8/18 at Reading (FMH,GEH), and 7 at S. Duxbury on 8/19 (FAP). The last was at Lincoln on 9/30 (JRA). Ten were banded, 9 at Marshfield Pond (MFM,VINS). The Magnolia Warbler followed the general pattern of the 1984 autumn migration in being reported in lower numbers than in other years during the 80's. Seventy-eight were recorded. Twenty-eight were banded at three sites, with 12 ringed at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). High counts included 7 banded at Woodstock on 9/13 (VINS), and 6 at WRD on 9/22 (JDM). The latest were 2 at HC on 10/2 (WGE). The earliest of 35 Cape May Warblers were at S. Duxbury (FAP), and Woodstock (WGE,NLM) on 8/14. The high count was 6 on 9/3 at Shrewsbury (LPS). Three were banded, 2 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The last was encountered at Winhall on 10/8 (WJN), a record late report for RVB by two days. Reports of Black-throated Blue Warblers recorded a total of 67 birds. The highest one-day count was 14 on 8/19 at S. Duxbury (FAP). A young Black-throated Blue was still being fed by its parents on Mt. Worcester on 8/27 (LK). Nineteen were banded, 12 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The last were 2 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 1 at

-40- Winhall (WJN) on 9/28. The Yellow-rumped Warbler was reported in excellent numbers totalling about 940. Most high counts were from the last week of September and the first week of October including the high count of 100 at W. Brattleboro on 9/24 (JJC). Twenty-seven were banded, with 17 netted at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). Yellow-rumps were reported to 11/16 (however see the winter 1984-85 RVB). Nearly one hundred Black-throated Green Warblers were reported. High counts were 12 on 9/2 at Ripton (MBN), and 24+ on 9/8 at W. Brattleboro (JJC). Only 6 were banded, 4 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS), a very low number. The last was at Shoreham on 10/9 (ELW). A little over 50 Blackburnian Warblers were reported. High counts were from late August and included 14 at S. Duxbury on 8/19 (FAP), and 12 on 8/24 at Reading (FMH,GEH). Two were banded at Marshfield (MFM). The last reported was at Winhall on 9/25 (WJN). An adult male Pine Warbler was observed at Gile Mt., Norwich on 9/22 (DaC,WGE); in Shoreham, 2 were reported 9/21 and 1 on 10/4 (ELW). The identification of this species is not easy, and this editor feels information is needed on how the species was separated from similar species such as Blackpoll, Bay-breasted, and Prairie Warblers. Observers are referred to an article by Bret Whitney in Birding entitled "Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, and Pine Warblers in fall plumage." (1983, vol. 15: 219-222). There were two reports of Prairie Warbler, one 9/8 at Dead Creek in Addison (ELW), surprising since the species is believed to be very rare in the Champlain Valley. The other was an imm. male at Woodstock on 8/18 (WGE,NLM). The autumn 1984 Palm Warbler migration was early; 13 of the 20 reported were noted during September. The earliest were 2 at Shelburne Pond on 9/7 (JID,MCD). The most reported was 3 at Quechee on 9/28 (WGE). The last was encountered at Rutland on 10/23 (WJN). Only 45 Bay-breasted Warblers were reported. The earliest were 3 at S. Duxbury on 8/14 (FAP). The maximum was 10 on 8/25 at WRD (JDM). The last was at Colchester on 9/29 (JDM). Numbers of Blackpoll Warblers reported were similar to those of the Bay-breast at 43. The earliest migrant reported was at S. Duxbury on 8/29 (FAP). The high count was 9 at Woodstock on 9/24 (JMN). The latest were 3 on 10/6 at Orwell (EPA). Four were banded at Marshfield and Ferdinand (MFM). There was a single, appropriately detailed, report of CERULEAN WARBLER, a very rare bird except at Sand Bar WMA during the breeding season. A single imm. was observed at Winhall on 9/1 (WJN). Just under fifty Black-and-white Warblers were reported. The high count was 9 on 8/19 at S. Duxbury (FAP). Eight were banded, 6 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The last was at Reading on 9/20 (FMH,GEH). Just over 60 American Redstarts were noted; high counts included 7 on 8/13 at Woodstock (WGE,NLM), and 6 at S. Duxbury on 8/19 (FAP). Nineteen were banded, with 14 netted at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The last were 2 at HC on 10/2 (WGE). Few Ovenbirds were noted with only 20 reported. Seven were banded, 6 at Marshfield (MFM). The high count was 5 on 8/19 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and the 'latest' was observed at S. Duxbury as well on 9/11 (FAP). Ovenbirds are usually reported until the end of September. Fourteen of the 18 Northern Waterthrushes reported were banded, 11 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The latest was at White River Jct. on 10/8 (WGE,NLM). There were two reports of our earliest departing warbler, the Louisiana Waterthrush. One was found at Woodstock on 8/10 (WGE,NLM), and 1 observed at WRD was at an extraordinary location and a bit late on 8/25 (JDM); the species is very rare in the Champlain Valley. Ten Mourning Warblers were recorded. Five were banded, 4 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The last was at Shoreham on 10/4 (ELW). Over 230 Common Yellowthroats were reported. One hundred of the 149 banded (MFM,VINS) were ringed at Woodstock including the seasonal high of 13 on 9/10. The latest

reported was at Woodstock on 10/18 (WGE). Just over 30 Wilson's Warblers were reported. Most active observers saw their first of the season during the fourth week of August, including the earliest on 8/24 at Reading (FMH,GEH). No observer reported more than three in a day. The last was at WRD on 9/29 (JDM). Eight were banded, 7 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). Forty-four Canada Warblers were reported. Counts reached 4 at Reading on 8/18 and 24 (FMH,GEH). Sixteen were banded, 15 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The latest was at W. Brattleboro on 9/21 (JJC).

TANAGER THROUGH SPARROWS

Numbers of Scarlet Tanagers were modest with 30 reported. The maximum was 5 on 9/9 at Woodstock (JMN). Four were banded, 2 each at Marshfield and Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The latest was a female at Lake Morey, Fairlee on 10/27 (WGE,NLM) matching the record late report for RVB. About 75 Northern Cardinals were reported. Adult cardinals were still feeding juveniles on 10/4 at N. Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). One was banded at Plainfield (MFM). Reports of cardinals ranged north to St. Johnsbury (fide FM), and Albany (TP). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were observed feeding juveniles to 8/10 at Randolph (EWC,MCC). About three dozen were reported. The high count was 6 on 9/5 at N. Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). Seven were banded, 4 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The latest was at Winhall on 9/24 (WJN). A female BLUE GROSBEAK was observed and carefully described by an observer familiar with the species, at Winhall Hollow from 8/20-21 (WJN). Eighteen of the 24 Indigo Buntings reported were noted during August. This species is most frequently observed around uncut cornfields during autumn. The latest was observed at Shoreham on 10/5 (ELW). A male DICKCISSEL was present at a Swanton feeder from 11/15-30+ (JCC, CRC). Only 10 Rufous-sided Towhees were noted. The high count was 3 at Tirmouth on 9/29 (CJF), and the last was at Reading on 10/13 (FMH,GEH). Over 380 American Tree Sparrows were reported. The earliest was at Woodstock on 10/18 (WGE,NLM). One was banded at Woodstock (VINS). The maximum count was 55 on 11/25 at WRD (JDM). Reports of about 200 Chipping Sparrows were submitted. High counts were from the first week of October including 40 on 10/3 at S. Duxbury (FAP), and 60 at Quechee on 10/5 (WGE). The last report was from 10/28 but see the winter 1984-85 RVB. Observers reported only 13 Field Sparrows. No counts exceeded four. Two were banded at Woodstock (VINS). The last reported were 2 at Vernon on 10/28 (JJC). A report of 25 Vesper Sparrows at Shoreham on 8/1 (ELW) represents one of the highest counts in a decade. (It should be pointed out that juvenile Horned Larks possess streaks, white outer tail feathers, and lack most of their parent's distinctive facial pattern making it plausible for them to be identified as Vesper Sparrows.) The last of the handful (15) of other Vesper Sparrows reported was at Woodstock on 11/1 (WGE). Over 110 Savannah Sparrows were reported. High counts included 32 on 9/24 at DCWMA (WGE), and 36 on 10/8 at White River Jct. (WGE,NLM). One was banded at Woodstock (VINS). The latest were 3 at Shoreham on 10/31 (ELW). A total of 31 Fox Sparrows were reported. The species arrived early as 1 appeared at N. Ferrisburg on 9/28 (JID,MCD). High counts included 5 at Marshfield on 10/14 (MFM), 5 at Albany on 10/20 (TP), and 6 at Tirmouth on 11/12 (CJF). The last reported was at Winhall on 11/13 (WJN). Over 660 Song Sparrows were reported. The peak of autumn departure was during mid-October, 63% of one observer's Song Sparrows were recorded 10/15-25. The high count of 50 on 10/14 at Weybridge (MBN) fits this general pattern. Forty-five were banded, 39 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS); the total at VINS was considered very low. Forty-two Lincoln's Sparrows were recorded. Seventeen were banded at three sites, the 7 caught at Woodstock being a low to-

-41- tal (MFM,VINS). Early migrants included birds at S. Duxbury on 9/4 (FAP), and HC on 9/5 (WJN). The high count was 6 at HC on 10/2 (WGE). The last was at Shoreham on 10/19 (ELW). Over 100 Swamp Sparrows were reported. High counts included 17 at HC on 10/2 (WGE), and 15 at Tirmouth Channel on 10/11 (CJF). Ten were banded, 7 at Marshfield Pond (MFM,VINS). The last prior to Christmas Bird Counts was reported on 10/29. Slightly less than 620 White-throated Sparrows were reported. The 1984 autumn migration was very small for this species, with no truly large numbers reported. High counts were 50 on 9/29 at WRD (JDM), 48 at W. Brattleboro on 10/1 (JJC), 50 at Reading on 10/10 (FMH,GEH), and 50 at Weybridge on 10/14 (MBN). One was reported into December at Albany (TP) in Orleans County where the species is very scarce in winter. Sixty-six of 95 banded were netted at Marshfield (MFM); only 2 were caught at Woodstock (VINS), an extremely low figure. The first of 103 White-crowned Sparrows reported was an imm. at WRD on 9/22 (JDM). Seasonal high counts included 17 at Hartford on 10/8 (WGE,NLM), and 16 at HC on 10/9 (JJC). Three were banded, 2 at Woodstock (MFM,VINS). The last of this season was noted on 11/1 (but see the 1984-85 winter RVB). There was no large October numerical peak for Dark-eyed Junco as there is in most years. Large numbers were not noted until November, for many observers not until late in the month. High counts included 50 at Shrewsbury on 11/5 (LPS), and 48 at W. Brattleboro on 11/6 (JJC). Twelve were banded (MFM,VINS), 7 by VINS. There were three reports of Lapland Longspur. One was observed at HC on 10/10 (WJN), 1 was noted at DCWMA, Addison on 10/23 (WGE), and a good count of 12 was made at DCWMA, Addison on 11/16 (WGE,SJS). About 270 Snow Buntings were reported. Early individuals included 1 in alternate plumage at Derby Line on 10/8 (FH fide ECH), and 1 on Camels Hump on 10/13 (PAT). High counts were 60 at WRD on 11/11 (WGE,NLM), 40 at Albany on 11/20 (TP), and 40 at Irasburg on 11/21 (MFM).

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

Over 200 Bobolinks were reported. The maximum was 60 on 8/29 at N. Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). The latest were 3 at Woodstock on 10/3 (WGE). The Red-winged Blackbird was reported in its usual large numbers. Thousands were observed during late October especially in the Champlain Valley. A flock of 50,000 blackbirds at N. Ferrisburg on 10/19 (JID,MCD) was largely composed of this species. Two were banded at Marshfield (MFM) and Woodstock (VINS). The Eastern Meadowlark was reported in low numbers with just 29 observed. No more than five were found on a given date and the latest was located on 11/6. Over 370 Rusty Blackbirds were reported. High counts were impressive with 100 at Marshfield on 9/28 (MFM), and 155 at WRD on 10/27 (JDM). The latest was at Woodstock on 11/14 (WGE). For Common Grackle an autumnal total report of 800 was low. The high was just 400+ on 10/17 at HC (WGE). Twelve were banded at Marshfield (MFM). High counts of Brown-headed Cowbird included 400+ on 8/27 at Albany (TP), 400+ at Addison on 9/2 (WGE), and 1000+ at Derby on 10/28 (DLC,PAT). Just under 50 Northern Orioles were reported. The maximum was 6 on 8/16 at Reading (FMH,GEH). Three were banded, 2 at Marshfield (MFM,VINS). The latest was at S. Duxbury on 9/11 (FAP). A good total of over 520 Purple Finches was reported. The largest numbers observed were from late in the season including counts of 57 at scattered Northeast Kingdom locations on 11/4 (DLC,BLR), 42 at Groton S.F. on 11/26 (MFM), and 40 at N. Ferrisburg on 11/29 (JID,MCD). M. Metcalf banded good numbers again handling 185 of 188 banded (MFM,VINS). Reports of House Finches indicate a broadening distribution and increasing numbers. Reports came from 6 of the state's 14 counties, but the species was unreported

from the Northeast Kingdom. High counts included 41 at Woodstock on 8/13 (WGE,NLM), 50 at Weybridge on 11/13 (MBN), and 45 at Hartford on 11/18 (WGE,NLM). Five were banded, 4 by VINS at Hartford; the 1 netted by M. Metcalf at Plainfield was her first. One at Lake Carmi in September (PJM) was at a new, but not unexpected, site. Red Crossbill reports numbered three. One was at Woodstock on 9/6 (WGE,NLM), 1 was over Spencer's Cabin, Winhall on 9/16 (WJN), and another was noted at Winhall on 10/5 (WJN). Numbers of the White-winged Crossbill were at their best since 1981. One hundred forty-six were reported, most in the northeast. The species was present in the Northeast Kingdom from at least early August onward. The high count at Moose Bog, Ferdinand, where crossbills were present all autumn was 99 on 11/4 (DLC,BLR). The most interesting report of this species also came from Moose Bog where 3 juveniles were observed, including one being fed by an adult male on 9/26 & 9/27 (CBe). Although Vermont is within the White-winged Crossbill's breeding range, the species eluded confirmation during the Vermont Atlas Project (1976-1981); the last documented breeding record was in Clarendon in 1943 (see The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Vermont). Other reports include 3 at Bear Swamp on 8/23 (FAP), 4-6 at Groton State Forest on 9/2 (CCF,DPC), 3 at Bartonsville on 9/3 (TEJ), and a male and a female at White Rocks Mt., Wallingford on 9/8 (RWP). Also remarkable were 4 banded, 3 at Ferdinand and 1 at Marshfield (MFM). The Common Redpoll was absent but for an anomalous November "influx" in the southern Green Mountains at Winhall. The maximum there was 50 on 11/20 (WJN). Over 800 Pine Siskins were reported, reflecting invasion status. The only report, until early October when the flight commenced, was of 1 at Moose Bog on 8/5 (WGE, NLM). High counts included 60 on 10/28 at Crystal Lake, Barton (DLC,PAT), and 170 at Lake Morey on 11/18 (WGE,NLM). The American Goldfinch was reported in excellent numbers with over 900 recorded. High counts included 151 on 10/8 at Addison (DLC), 80+ at Woodstock on 10/19, including 21 banded (WGE,NLM), and 80 at Lake Morey on 10/27 (WGE,NLM). Thirty-three were banded (MFM,VINS), with Woodstock's 29 a station record. Six eggs were in a nest at Woodstock on 8/17 (WGE,NLM), and fledged young were being fed to 10/3 at N. Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). Over 540 Evening Grosbeaks were reported. There were seven August reports, mostly from northern Vermont. Most grosbeaks were in evidence by mid to late October. The largest numbers stayed north as reflected by a high count of 175 at Island Pond on 10/28 (DLC,PAT). Three were banded at Marshfield (MFM). The House Sparrow was still common enough for most observers to ignore it, it seems. There were some interesting comments regarding the effects of competition between House Finches and House Sparrows. A persistent pair of sparrows did their best to establish themselves in a bluebird house at VINS' Bragdon Nature Preserve in Woodstock during August, to no avail due to the vigilance of Nancy Martin.

Corrigenda: Please change Lincoln's Sparrow in 1983 Fall Migration report p. 35 column 1 to read "...however the earliest migrants appear to have been 1 at Colchester (JDM), and 1 at Hartland (WGE,NLM) on 9/4;..."

ABBREVIATIONS USED:

- ad. - adult
- DCWMA - Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area
- HC - Herrick's Cove
- imm. - immature
- MNWR - Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge
- TWDR - Thurman W. Dix Reservoir
- WRD - Winooski River Delta

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