

Records of Vermont Birds

SUMMER 1977

1 JUNE - 31 JULY

WAYNE SCOTT, EDITOR

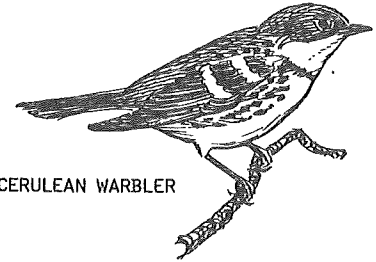
Many of you have now toiled for two summers: canvassing blocks of land approximately 3 miles by 3 miles; gingerly, sometimes painfully negotiating paths through nearly impenetrable thickets of prickly ash; soaking shoes and pantlegs while somnambulating through dew-drenched, 5:00 a.m. hay fields; slapping at so many mosquitoes and black flies that the act itself becomes autonomic. These are among the trials besetting dauntless Atlas workers, and most of you will agree they are more than balanced by the intangible (and often tangible) rewards of the venture.

Rewards are different for each person; but Atlas workers with whom I have talked become more animated, smiles cross their faces as experiences are related and shared. There is little doubt they feel justly compensated for the effort and occasional inconvenience.

The reader is again reminded with embarrassment and apology * that the following report summarizes the first summer, 1977.

Atlas 1977 produced a prodigious quantity of data, to be precise, 8,618 individual sightings with 3,472 confirmations (40%) in 185 priority and nonpriority blocks. Of the 171 species recorded thus far, 149 or 87% have been confirmed in at least one block including BARN OWL, ORCHARD ORIOLE, CERULEAN WARBLER and WILSON'S WARBLER. Barn Owl and Cerulean Warbler join the ranks of confirmed nesters in Vermont for the first time in recorded ornithological history and Orchard Oriole and Wilson's Warbler for the first time in many years. The average number of species found in blocks throughout the state is 48, and the average number of confirmations, 20. To date William Norse is the only Atlas worker who has reported over 100 species in a single block; 114 in Winhall, and the 77 confirmations in the same block is the most in that category as well. For what it is worth, no species has been reported in more than 80% of the blocks surveyed; but 23 have been sighted in 60-80%, 33 in 40-60% and 113 in less than 40% of the blocks.

The eleven most commonly reported species include Robin (146 blocks), Red-winged Blackbird (137), Song Sparrow (134), Common Yellowthroat (130), American Goldfinch (129), Red-eyed Vireo (128), Black-capped Chickadee (127),



CERULEAN WARBLER

Tree Swallow (126), Gray Catbird (126), Eastern Kingbird (125), and Barn Swallow (125).

A vagrant GLOSSY IBIS near Missisquoi NWR and a MUTE SWAN at Sand Bar Refuge in Milton were the non-Atlas highlights of the 1977 season. While Glossy Ibis has been seen frequently enough in the past to warrant inclusion in Spear's Birds of Vermont as an irregular visitor, Mute Swan has never before been reported in the state and therefore deserves the honor of the outstanding bird of the summer.

In compiling data for this report, I departed, for the most part, from the convention of distinguishing among blocks classified as priority, nonpriority or unique and fragile. These distinctions which will be made in the final analysis of all Atlas data, are not included because I felt all reports warrant at least statistical inclusion in the tallies for the seasonal report.

Because some tally sheets forwarded from regional coordinators contained results from 1976 and 1977, some species totals represent cumulative results of the two years. To discern any trends from 1976 to 1977 would at best be subjective in light of the greatly increased coverage in 1977.

Throughout the text I have referred frequently to various regions. These physiographic regions have been thoroughly described by Dickinson and Garland in a Vermont Fish and Game publication entitled The White-tailed Deer Resource of Vermont. Established primarily on the basis of differences in cli-

* *Managing Editor's Note: Readers please bear in mind the hours of work which the volunteer Seasonal Editors put into preparing these reports and try to be patient with the great gap in time between season's close and publication! Wayne Scott needed much additional time to prepare a computer analysis of the Atlas data, as part of his Master's Thesis work at Middlebury College. At this point, he is still working on the write-up for Summer 1978.*

Introduction, continued

mate, topography and soil, the seven regions include the Lake Plains (Champlain Valley), Green Mountains (the main spine of the mountain range running north-south from Canada to Massachusetts), North-central (sandwiched between the Green Mountains and Essex County), Northeast Highlands (primarily Essex County), East-central (about dead-center in the state but including St. Johnsbury, Waterford and Barnet), Western Foothills (the Taconic Mountains extending along the western border with New York south of Rutland) and the Eastern Foothills (the Connecticut River Valley and adjacent highlands north to Barnet).

A last word: a few observers submitted nesting data including clutch sizes, egg and fledge dates, numbers of nesting pairs, etc. Where appropriate, this information has been passed along making this report the most thorough and comprehensive of all summer "Records of Vermont Birds." I urge other birders to do the same so that we can begin to establish patterns of nesting behavior here in Vermont. Good Birding in '79!

Atlasing has produced a total of six records of Common Loons, only two of which are in priority blocks. Confirmed nesting has been obtained at Norton Pond and at Averill where a nest with eggs was discovered. Loons apparently holding territory were observed at Holland Pond, Green River Reservoir, Marshfield Dam (SBL) and Maidstone Lake (EHE), and a possible nesting was obtained in East Barre (JS). In addition, two adults were present on Lake Morey from 6/13 to 6/19 (RPr) and one spent the month of July in Quechee (WGE). Most birders are aware of the declining status of this magnificent bird.

Out of a total of nine Atlas records obtained for Pied-billed Grebe, only two produced confirmations; a nest was found at Missisquoi (GFO) and recently fledged young were seen in Brattleboro (DWV). In general, this species was unreported from the central part of the state (exception: a possible nester from the Woodstock North block (MLW). Alan Pistorius' assessment of "very scarce" seems to accurately underscore its status statewide.

Great Blue Herons were widespread and common in 1977, apparently occupying suitable habitat throughout the state. Yet in spite of the apparent abundance, only 3 confirmations were obtained out of 48 Atlas records and numerous separate reports. As many as 8 were reported from Dead Creek by various observers but no evidence of nesting was found. (AP et. mult. al.) Eleanor Ellis reports she is receiving more reports of this species.

Like the previous species, Green Heron was reported throughout the state with 47 sightings from Atlas priority and nonpriority blocks. A majority (16 and 14) were obtained from the Champlain and Connecticut River Valleys. In Northeast Vermont, generally considered to be near the northern limit of its range, 3 possible nestings were obtained (Ecr et. al.).

The nesting of Cattle Egret in Vermont has now been established beyond doubt. Breeding, of course, has taken place in the Four Brothers since 1973. Dave Capen observed two on nests on Young Island May 25, and flushed two others from the nesting colony of Cattle Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons. 25 were seen on the southernmost of the Seven Sisters in early June (JDS). In addition, reports were submitted of birds at Missisquoi (GFO) and Middlebury (AP), and a possible nesting was recorded in Colchester (CSP).

Except for a possible nesting of Black-crowned Night Heron from Fairbanks Mt., Concord, in the northeast kingdom (Ecr), all records of this species, including those from seven additional Atlas blocks, came from the Champlain Valley with confirmed nesting in South Hero (SBL) and at Lewis Creek (JID and MCD). At Dead Creek it was not uncommon to flush 9 birds at once from one spot. Apparently, though, it is still not clear whether these birds were individuals which dispersed after breeding or nested at Dead Creek. Pistorius lists them only as possible breeders in his Dead Creek block.

Six of the 7 Atlas records of Least Bittern obtained in the Champlain Valley were made in the Champlain Islands and at Missisquoi NWF. The only Atlas location outside the Valley was West Rutland Marsh where Trepanier obtained a probable nesting. Also, a pair was seen there on 6/27 (WGE). Efforts should be made to determine if this species is distributed more widely in Vermont especially in southern counties.

The American Bittern was established as a confirmed nester in 5 of the 18 priority blocks. Observers found evidence in an additional 12 nonpriority blocks of which 2 contained confirmed nesters. The preponderance of records was established in the Champlain Valley and in the southern half of the state; one each in Hardwick, Plainfield and Montpelier (LNM, deG, VC).

A GLOSSY IBIS on 6/2 at Missisquoi (GFO) was probably the same bird sighted by the Ellisons, Oatman and this editor on a century run 5/21.

Certainly one of the most exciting birds of the season was a MUTE SWAN at the Sand Bar Wildlife Refuge, the first record for the state, seen well by many observers beginning about July 27 (NK, ORE, BSE, et. mult. al.). This species, which is native to Eurasia, was introduced into the U.S. probably about 1910. It inhabits coastal ponds and estuaries from New Jersey to Massachusetts and generally moves southward only in response to freezing in the winter. Bull (1974) describes Mute Swans as "sedentary" and Palmer (1976) cites the dependence of young birds on their parents for eathering food, and notes that in Rhode Island family groups tend not to break up until September. This suggests perhaps that the Sand Bar Swan was either an unattached adult or first year bird with the wanderlust.

Canada Goose was confirmed in 2 nonpriority blocks both in the Champlain Valley. Margaret and John Dye found a nest with eggs on Lewis Creek north of Vergennes and Lillian Birkett found downy young in a Monkton block. In addition possible nesting status was established outside the Champlain Valley in Pawlet (SAS), Londonderry (WJN) and Wilmington (LBo). This species seems to be slowly establishing nesting especially in the Champlain Valley.

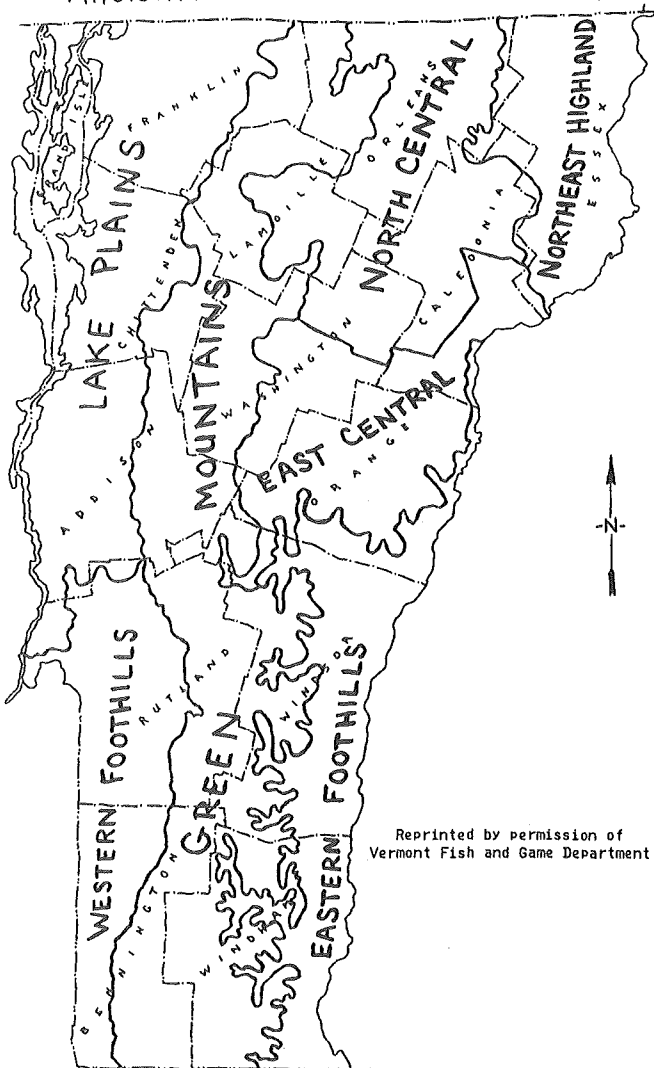
Most of the Atlas records for Mallard were obtained from the Lake Champlain (19) and Connecticut River (12) Valleys. 50 Atlas sightings produced 28 confirmed nestings of which 14 were in priority blocks. The northeastern portion of the state produced only 2 records - both possible nestings from Lyndonville and Middlesex (Ecr and JH).

Black Duck distribution closely corresponded to that of Mallard except that the Northeast regions produced 12 Atlas sightings of which 7 were confirmations. The total number of Atlas records submitted was 54 of which 38 were confirmed (20 in priority blocks). Broods were present by the middle of June (WJN and WGE).

While no Gadwall sightings were submitted for Vermont, it is interesting to note that stemming from a sighting of a pair during the VINS boat trip, June 11, to the Four Brothers Islands (WGE, JMCP, WS et. al.), this species was subsequently confirmed as a nester there by Mike Peterson of High Peaks Audubon and independently by Dave Capen who saw a female with a brood of 7 swimming toward the Vermont side.

Pintail was established as a confirmed nester at Missisquoi NWR (GFO) and in a South Hero Block (GMc). Of considerable interest was a confirmed breeding of Pintail in the Fairbanks Mt.-Concord block in the Northeast Kingdom (Ecr). The range of this species (Palmer, 1976) seems to skirt the northern and eastern

PHYSIOGRAPHIC REGIONS OF VERMONT



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perimeters of New England. These northern Vermont records represent local, southern extensions of the distributions. An additional sighting comes from Colchester on 7/28 when a pair were seen (WGE, RPR).

Like the Pintail the principal breeding range of Green-winged Teal lies north of Vermont extending south to the St. Lawrence Seaway (Palmer, 1976). Local records exist for upstate New York (Bull, 1974). Now in 4 locations in Vermont; 2 in East Alburg (GFO) and one along Dead Creek (AP), and one in St. Albans Bay (CCH), nesting has been confirmed. Also like the Pintail, these records represent local pockets of extralimital breeding.

14 of 17 Atlas records of Blue-winged Teal were obtained in the Champlain Valley. Only one record, a possible nest in the Wilmington-Whitingham area (LBo), came from the southern half of the state. Outside of Atlas work, 10 were reported from Dead Creek on 7/3 (WJN) and 30+ were seen in the Burlington Intervale July 28 (WGE and RPR).

Two nonpriority blocks at Missisquoi NWR have produced probable breeding status for the Northern Shoveler (GFO). Vermont lies well east of 6 scattered breeding localities known in western New York State (Bull, 1974) considered the eastern limit of nesting.

Wood Duck was found in 39 priority and nonpriority blocks statewide; 28 of these produced confirmed nesting status. The distribution seems to be statewide with no one region outside of the heavily canvassed Champlain Valley producing a preponderance of records.

All Atlas records and sightings of Common Goldeneye were obtained from Grand Isle County or immediately adjacent in Sand Bar Refuge. Of the 7 Atlas blocks which contained this species, 5 produced confirmed nesting (GHM, GFO, GMC). Several broods were seen at Mud Creek in Alburg and at Sand Bar Refuge on June 21 (SBL et. al.). Vermont lies at the southern limit of its range; therefore records from more southern sections of the state would be of considerable interest.

Seven priority and 6 nonpriority blocks produced breeding records for Hooded Merganser. Six of the 7 physiographic regions yielded at least one Atlas record. Observers in the Connecticut River Valley south of Barnet did not find any, the sole sighting for this region being a single female or immature reported July 27 from North Springfield (fide EE). Confirmation was obtained at Missisquoi (GFO), South Hero (GMC), Wallingford (PDU) and Londonderry (WJN). Non-Atlas breeding reports were submitted as early as June 3 when 3 females and 9 young were seen in East Montpelier (JCH fide MFH) and on July 11, a female with 11 young was seen in Newport (KCE). The occurrence of this species is at best local and scattered.

Interestingly, all Atlas data for Common Merganser were obtained outside the Champlain Valley. The 10 blocks which contained this species are situated in eastern or south-central parts of the state. So far, confirmation of nesting has been obtained in Lyndonville (ECr), Ludlow (EE) and Londonderry (WJN). A pair nested in Gale Meadows and 3 pairs were reported from the West River in South Londonderry (WJN).

The elusive Turkey Vulture has been recorded in 13 blocks scattered in all but the East-central and Northeast regions of the state. Confirmation of nesting anywhere in Vermont has so far eluded even the most diligent birders. Alas, the best anyone has been able to do is establish this species as a possible nester. A terse "None" accompanies one report from Woodstock (SBL). In the Champlain Valley, Alan Pistorius described it as "regular but in smaller numbers." Most observers reported seeing 1 to 3 individuals; the high for the season was 7 over Monkton on 6/16 (CBH).

Goshawk has now been found in 8 priority and 6 non priority blocks; and in 3 of the former, a block near Strafford (WGE and GFE), one near Stowe (CWJ) and one near Saxtons River (DC), confirmation was obtained. The distribution of all Atlas sightings seems to be predominately from the southern half of the state. This may reflect the intensity of coverage rather than actual distribution; large tracts of forest in the northern part of the state likely contain nesting Goshawks.

The Sharp-shinned Hawk was observed in 18 Atlas blocks scattered more or less statewide. Approximately an equal number of blocks in the northern and southern halves of the state contained evidence of breeding; none of these, however, yielded solid confirmation. Sightings in the Champlain Valley were limited to the easternmost fringe near the mountains and larger forest tracts (i.e., Colchester, Hinesburg and Essex Center).

Seven of the 10 Atlas sightings of Cooper's Hawk have been obtained in or near the Green Mountain region. Exceptions include possible nestings from Pawlet (SAS), Cavendish (EE), and Wallonsac (MBV). The 10 Atlas records so far are clearly an improvement over the 2 made during the 1976 dry-run. A single non-Atlas sighting was submitted from West Rutland Marsh on July 20 (SBL et. al.).

Observers have reported Red-tailed Hawk in 73 Atlas blocks (50 priority). Clearly the preponderance of observations were made in western and southern regions with many fewer from the east-central and northeast regions. A "ghostly-white" albino Red-tail which has been returned to the Albany, Vermont area since 1971 was reported by Donald and Shirley Nelson and verified by Frank Oatman. With apologies to Frank, I quote from his report. "From a distance the bird appears pure, snowy white. But close telescopic study reveals black speckling before and behind each eye and from mid-crown to the nape. On the back, two rounded feather ends show up clearly as pure black. The 2 to 3 outer tail feathers on either side are white, but the center of the tail is reddish, as red as any normal plumaged Red-tail... In flight the breast, as well as the entire underside of body and wings, appear completely white, as white as a very pale Snowy Owl."

Early Atlas data indicate that the Red-shouldered Hawk prefers the mountainous region down the middle of the state. Of the 33 priority and nonpriority blocks which contained this species, 14 were located in this region. None were located in the Northeast highland region of extreme northeastern Vermont. Thus far workers have confirmed nesting in only 7 of the 33 blocks.

Aside from possible nesting in the Burlington Area and in Essex Center, all Atlas data on Broad-winged Hawks comes from areas outside of the western fringe of the state. In fact 30 of

the 52 Atlas sightings submitted came from blocks situated proximate to the main north-south spine of the Green Mountains and in the hills just west of and adjacent to the Connecticut River Valley. Another 20 sightings were made in blocks situated in North Central, East Central, and Northeast regions of the state. Confirmation has been obtained in 12 blocks.

Only one Bald Eagle was sighted this summer, in South Londonderry. An adult was reported on June 21 by Martin Oakland (fide NS). Compare this with the total of 8 in 1975 and 4 in 1976.

Nine of the 12 Atlas records for Marsh Hawk have come from the northern half of the state. The rather scattered sightings from northern Vermont suggest not only low population density for this species statewide but underscores its dependence on marsh habitat some of which is threatened by draining and development.

The Osprey may be making a comeback here in Vermont. Historically, it has nested in the state and possibly as late as 1965 at Lake Memphremagog. The population shows signs of revitalization after the alarming decline due to the use of DDT, with several summer sightings.

Observers obtained evidence of American Kestrel nesting in 84 blocks. Distribution of this species was widespread except in extreme northeastern Vermont (Essex County) where Atlas workers recorded this species in 4 blocks.

Not surprisingly the 3 Atlas records for Spruce Grouse have come from extreme northern sections of the state. In block 1823 (Averill) Oatman reports historical nesting for this species. In Enosburg Falls and on Wheeler Mt. in Lyndonville observers obtained possible nesting for this elusive species.

Ruffed Grouse has now been reported in 99 priority and non-priority blocks, generously distributed statewide. Prum reports that in the eastern half of the state this species was especially abundant indicating he saw a half dozen family groups. Norse and Laughlin echo this assessment, but Pistorius failed to find any in his Champlain Valley blocks. Fledgling young were observed on 6/22 in Woodstock (JMN) and on South Mountain 6/28 (WS).

Recently fledged Bobwhite young were found in a Cavendish block (EE) and evidence of possible nesting was obtained in two blocks near Lyndonville (ECr and LG). Interestingly, all records in the previous two years for this introduced species have come from central and northern parts of the state where the relatively more severe winter should have less than salubrious effect on the population.

Another species introduced as game bird is the Ring-necked Pheasant, which like the Bobwhite, is rare and local. Two possible nestings were obtained in East Alburg (GFO) and at West Rutland (LHT). Two observers did establish evidence for probable breeding in Manchester (CI and BMC), and Bill Norse saw a displaying male Pheasant in Wardsboro 6/26.

Gray Partridge was confirmed as a nester in one Grand Isle County block (Missisquoi, GFO), was probable in another, and possible in a third (South Hero, ALG). Two were seen on 6/12 in Grand Isle (WS, GFE).

Turkey is expanding its range in the areas where the Vermont Fish and Game Department has reintroduced this species. A majority of the 21 blocks in which this species was found are located in the southwestern strip between Rutland and Bensen, south to Bennington. But it is also spreading from original introduction sights on the eastern side of the state with confirmation in 5 blocks. A report of fledged young in the Stowe area is thought to be domestic turkeys that have been released (CWJ).

The only southern Vermont block in which evidence for nesting was found for Virginia Rail was in Londonderry (WJN). Observers reported rails in 15 northern Vermont blocks, 7 of which are located in the Champlain Valley. Conflicting reports as to their status at Dead Creek come from Walt Ellison who described them "in normal numbers," while Alan Pistorius wrote they were "secretive...or scarce..." Dead Creek aside, this editor suspects that distribution in southern Vermont is not as limited as the Atlas data indicates.

Reported from 6 blocks, Sora (Rails) appear to be of limited distribution. Evidence for nesting has been obtained at Missisquoi (GFO), East Creek (Sto), West Rutland Marsh (SBL et. al.), Londonderry (WJN) and has been confirmed at South Hero (GMC). Extra Atlas reports were submitted by Ellison and Prum who saw one at South Bay Marshes, Newport on 7/8; by this editor who saw 3 at Dead Creek on 6/12; and by Norse who saw an undisclosed number at Dead Creek on 7/3.

Common Gallinule seems to be distributed in suitable habitat throughout the Champlain Valley. Of the 13 blocks in which this species was found, 11 were located there. Alan Pistorius reports 6 to 8 pairs took up residence in his Dead Creek block. Rare elsewhere, a probable nesting was obtained in Plainfield (deG) and confirmation was established in Vermont near Putnam, N.Y. (Sto), and this species was recorded for the first time ever as a nester in South Shaftsbury (RSK).

There is little doubt that Killdeer is common and widespread statewide. 97 blocks have been found to contain Killdeer and 54 are listed as having confirmed nesting pairs. Migrational concentrations were reported from Lake Hardwick where 35 were seen on 7/25 and 50 were seen 7/28 (MFH).

67 blocks, distributed in all but extreme northeastern Vermont, contained 19 confirmed nesting American Woodcocks, 31 probable nesters and 17 possibles. The only report from Essex County this year was of a single bird in Brighton, 7/7 (WGE and RPR). Elsewhere, a pair at Hardwick Lake 7/19 (MFH) were probably early migrants.

With apologies to Walt Ellison, the Fall Editor, I include here a report of Golden Plover on 8/18 in Essex Center (ORE and BSE). This antedates the 1975 earliest arrival date by 1 week.

The season's only Ruddy Turnstones, seen at Blodgett's Beach on 7/30 (RL), were the first fall migrants reported. This species was unreported in 1976 probably due to the high lake levels that year which reduced the available habitat.

Atlas workers have now identified 45 blocks in which Common Snipe has occurred; 9 blocks produced confirmed nesting. The preponderance of records come from the Champlain Valley but distribution was scattered statewide with records obtained from each of 7 regions. Migrants began to appear in late July at Dead Creek (AP), and in Colchester on 7/30; 8 were seen at the mouth of

the Winooski River (WGE, RPr).

Priority blocks near St. Albans and South Hero have yielded the only evidence for Atlas of nesting Upland Sandpiper. In Addison, where this species has nested in the past, 2 adults with 2 young were seen on 7/12 (KCE). An annoyed adult posed on a fencepost in Ferrisburg on 6/12 for VINS people (WS et. al.), and 3 other individuals were seen at Dead Creek the same day (FO et. al.). Alan Pistorius reports at least 6 "flying and buelne" in his Atlas block in Pantou.

Spotted Sandpiper was reported in 58 Atlas blocks, 17 of which produced confirmed nesting. Each of the 7 regions were represented with the Champlain and Connecticut River Valleys taking the honors for most blocks reporting this species. Ellison found 21 birds in 9 Atlas blocks. Four at Lake Hardwick on 7/28 (MFM) were most certainly fall migrants.

Solitary Sandpiper which has never been discovered nesting in the continental U.S. continues to create confusion for Atlas workers. Because this species is one of the first fall migrants - often times they can be seen as early as the first week in July - they can be mistaken as possible nesters. The right kind of habitat does exist in the state and nesting is not inconceivable here. Scattered summer reports came from the Missisquoi Refuge (GFO); earliest migrants this year were seen on 7/15 - a single bird in Guildhall (WGE and RPr) and on 7/25, 8 at Lake Hardwick (MFM).

A scattering of reports of migrant Scolopacidae come primarily from the Champlain Valley. These reports are remarkable more for the early dates of arrival than for the diversity of species represented.

The earliest migrant, a Lesser Yellowlegs, spotted at Dead Creek on 6/21 (AP), was at least 15 days earlier than any other sightings and represents an extraordinarily early record by anyone's standards. In fact, the appropriate question one might ask is: In which direction was it migrating? The next report for this species, generally the earliest fall migrant, was also from Dead Creek on 7/6 when a pair was sighted (WS).

Greater Yellowlegs was first reported from Dead Creek on 7/19 as was Pectoral Sandpiper (AP). Two Least Sandpipers at Dead Creek on 7/6 were a week to 10 days earlier than usual. The month's high count of 30 was at Lake Hardwick on 7/25 (MFM) and 12 were seen in Colchester on 7/30 (WGE, RPr).

Several Dowitchers (sp.) were seen at Dead Creek on 7/19 (AP) for the only report of the season. The Short-billed Dowitcher tends to be the earliest migrant of the two Limnodromus, peaking on the coast of Massachusetts about the third week of July and again in mid-August. The Long-billed usually peaks about mid-October and tends to be much less common in general.

The season's only reports of Semipalmated Sandpiper were a single bird at Dead Creek on 7/13 (WS) and a flock of 24 in Colchester and a single individual in Burlington on 7/28 (WGE and RPr). The Dead Creek birds are the earliest record reported for this species in the 4 years of the "Records of Vermont Birds."

There was only one report of Greater Black-backed Gull this season, that of an immature, second year individual in Burlington 7/30 (WGE and RPr). This species which has become almost common in the Burlington area in the winter, is a coastal nester and finds its way onto the pages of the Summer "Records" for the first time.

Walt Ellison reports Herring Gull sightings from Burlington, Colchester and White River Junction, and Sally Laughlin reports larger numbers of Herring than Ring-billed Gulls on northern Vermont lakes.

Ring-billed Gulls are frequently seen inland especially in the Champlain Valley. 50+ were seen 7/13 at Dead Creek (WJN) and 10 gulls, present throughout June on Lake Dunmore had grown to 20+ by the end of July. The question arises, do these birds nest inland in the Champlain Valley or are they nonbreeding adults from the Four Brothers Islands population. The Lake Dunmore population probably does not nest due to a combination of two factors. The first is that there is only one small island in the lake and second, this island is frequently visited by swimmers and boaters. In Atlas Data, there is little to suggest much less confirm that breeding occurs inland (exception: one possible nesting from Stowe (CWJ)).

A scattering of Bonaparte's Gull sightings, all from Lake Champlain, were submitted for the 1977 season. The earliest was 7/19, north of Button Bay, an adult-plumaged individual seen by Pistorius. Three still in summer garb on 7/28 at Blodgett's in Burlington (WGE and RPr) and 4 in the same spot two days later (ORE and BSE) plus a single summer plumaged adult near Shoreham south of the Crown Point Bridge (WS) round out the records for this season.

The one Atlas record for Common Tern has established this species as a confirmed nester in St. Albans Bay (GMC).

Black Tern was confirmed as nesting in 4 of 5 blocks in the Champlain Valley. The Dyes estimate 15 pairs in Little Otter Creek sland alone and as many as 30 at once were reported from Dead Creek (AP). Three pairs on the Missisquoi River on 6/22 and an unreported number were observed over the Lake Memphremagog public beach on 6/10 (FD, LD).

An interesting distribution for Mourning Dove is being revealed by Atlas work. Essex County and environs produced only one Atlas record for this species, a probable nesting in the Victory-Burke area. Otherwise doves appear to inhabit all regions of the state in good numbers. Atlas workers have confirmed nesting in 27 of 88 blocks statewide.

Reports of Yellow-billed Cuckoo have proliferated this year. The first Atlas confirmation was obtained in the Dead Creek area (AP). In addition, Mt. Philo, Strafford, Mt. Cube and Londonderry quadrangles each contained an Atlas block which yielded probable nesting. Norse reports it was a "good year for this usually scarce bird." He found birds in Chester, Wardsboro and at Dead Creek. Pistorius concurred describing this as a "banner year" in the Dead Creek area, while Ellison sighted 4 on 7/19 in Fairlee and Bradford. Additional sightings were made in Milton 6/12 and Arlington 7/22 (WGE et. al.). Undoubtedly the spread of tent caterpillars has aided in the increase in sightings.

48 blocks are now known to contain Black-billed Cuckoo and 7 of these were found to contain confirmed nesters. There were

no birds reported from the East-central region; otherwise distribution appears widespread.

There have been few sightings of BARN OWL in recent years so it is with interest and excitement that the first confirmed nesting is reported. Mrs. Douglas Burden rescued 3 nestlings from a collapsed chimney and entrusted their care to VINS. Because this species tends to be sensitive to extreme cold its occurrence in upstate eastern New York and Vermont is erratic and tentative. Only 2 known nesting sites occur in New York north of Albany and one extralimital nesting has been recorded in southern Quebec (Godfrey, 1966).

Blocks in South Hero (GMC), Colchester (CSP), Dead Creek (AP) and Bennington-Wallonsac (MBV) contained nesting Screech Owls. A scattering of locations outside the western part of the state contained possible or probable nesting birds including Stowe (CWJ), Plainfield (deG), Cavendish (EE) and Saxtons River (DC). Data in recent Records suggest that this species is most widely distributed in the Champlain Valley; additional Atlas work hopefully will shed more light on its status in Vermont.

Great Horned Owl now has been reported in 34 Atlas blocks. The preponderance of sightings from the Champlain Valley and southern Vermont is probably due in part to relatively less coverage in the northern part of the state. In any event, each region contained at least one record. Young were reported in early June from Woodstock (SBL) and Gale Meadows (WJN).

Barred Owl has been found more frequently from the Green Mountain region and eastern foothills than from the Champlain Valley. Of the 38 blocks in which this owl has been found, none fall within Essex County though it is almost certain they nest there.

Subsequent to confirmation of nesting of Long-eared Owl in Sudbury in 1976, Atlas sightings were made in 2 Londonderry locations (WJN). These were the only reports for 1977.

Saw-whet Owl has now been reported in 4 blocks. In addition to the 1976 records from Underhill, Plainfield, and Hiley Hill, Marlboro, a possible nesting in 1977 from Winhall (WJN) was submitted.

Trying to confirm Whip-poor-will certainly ranks as one of the most challenging endeavors of the Atlas project, and as yet, no one has accomplished this feat. Of 16 blocks in which this bird has been found, half yielded evidence of probable nesting. 10 blocks were located in the eastern foothills of the Connecticut River Valley; there were 6 additional blocks scattered statewide in Island Pond (FO), Dead Creek (AP), Bensen (TG), Randolph (WGE), Pawlet (KN and AN) and Londonderry (WJN). Incidental records were submitted from Bethel (LP) and Plainfield (fide MFM).

Common Nighthawk has been located in 19 blocks in all regions of the state. Confirmed nesting has been established near Springfield (J and MPE), Saxtons River (DC), Bellows Falls (DC), and Brattleboro (LPM). Early Atlas data suggest this bird, like the previous species, is more densely distributed in the Connecticut River Valley.

Chimney Swift was widely and frequently reported from all regions of the state with observers reporting it in 91 blocks (Co:31, Pr:11, Po:49). This species should not be too difficult to confirm; birders are referred to the "ON" criterion which should be sufficient to establish confirmation.

Even more ubiquitous than the previous species, Ruby-throated Hummingbird has been located in 103 blocks. Blocks seem to be evenly distributed north and south but just over half are located in the Green Mountain and Eastern foothills regions. Interestingly, Pistorius noted this species to be absent in the central and western Champlain Valley but to be quite common nearby on South Mountain, Bristol (AP, WS).

The distribution of the Belted Kingfisher appears to be very similar to that of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. 31 confirmations were obtained out of a total of 102 Atlas blocks.

Present in 124 blocks throughout the state, Common Flicker appears to be one of the most common nesting species.

As I mentioned in last year's report, one can only make inferences about the density of a given species by examining the frequency it is reported by Atlas workers. In addition to recording basic Atlas information, George and Walter Ellison kept careful count of the numbers of individuals of each species in the blocks he did. Interesting comparisons can be made among the previous 4 species, all of which were found in 90 or more blocks throughout the state and in at least 14 of the 15 blocks he did. He sighted 89 Flickers in 14 blocks compared to 70 in 15 blocks for Chimney Swift, 34 in 14 blocks for Ruby-throated Hummingbird and 13 in 9 blocks for Kingfisher. Clearly, there are differences in density which are not reflected in the Atlas data. Certainly, Flicker and Chimney Swift are highly visible easily recognizable species and are present in suburban and urban areas. Ruby-throated Hummingbird appears to be quite common but a little more difficult to locate. Kingfisher, while widespread and reasonably common, occurs in lower numbers than the other 3 species. That Kingfisher has the specific habitat requirement of water and occupies a higher trophic level than the other birds, probably accounts, at least in part, for the "absolute" values Ellison submits.

Pileated Woodpecker occurred in 75 blocks distributed statewide, of which 15 produced confirmed nesting. Ellison reports 14 in 8 blocks in east central and northeastern Vermont. Fledgling young were reported on 7/1 in West Windsor (MBF).

Aside from a possible nesting at Pudding Hill in Lyndonville, Red-headed Woodpecker was found exclusively in the central and southern Champlain Valley. A possible nesting at Georgia Plains (RJ) is north of its usual occurrences in the Valley. Its occurrence in recent years has been limited in general to the Burlington area south to Middlebury and Weybridge. Overall 9 blocks were found to contain this species; confirmation was obtained in Monkton (LBI), Middlebury (actually Weybridge) (WS), near Crown Point, New York (BCW) and at East Creek, Orwell (STO).

Not unexpectedly, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker occurred more frequently in the Green Mountain region than in any other. Of the 78 total blocks from which this species was reported, 26 are located there. Ellison sighted 64 in 13 blocks with a single

block high of 12 in Lewis (extreme northeastern Vermont) on 7/9 (WGE, RPr). The season's first fledgling Sapsuckers were found in Ludlow on 7/3 (EE et. al.).

The distribution of Hairy and Downy Woodpecker seems to be virtually identical. Hairy was found in 112 blocks statewide, the Downy in 111. Regional distribution corresponds closely as well. Ellison found 50 Hairy's in 12 blocks and 49 Downy's in 13 blocks. Fledgling Downy's were seen as early as 6/30 (EE et. al.) in Springfield and Hairy's were feeding young in Woodstock by 6/12 (JMN) and in South Strafford on 7/12 (HR).

The boreal Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker has been located in 3 blocks, 2 in the Northeast Kingdom and 1 in southern Vermont. Two males were seen in a Moran block (WGE and RPr) and of course breeding has been confirmed in Averill (FO et. al.). In Gale Meadows where this species has nested before 1968, a single bird, July 10, was sighted as a possible nester (WJN).

A very common bird throughout most of the state, Eastern Kingbird has been located in 125 blocks and confirmed in 80. All reports indicate this bird is doing well. Ellison's 107 birds in 13 blocks substantiates that assessment. Two young had fledged in Woodstock by 6/29 (JMN).

15 of 74 blocks containing Great Crested Flycatcher have yielded confirmed nestings. Ellison found 43 in 10 blocks with a high of 9 in Tunbridge (WGE, GFE) and in Vershire (WGE, GFE, RPr). 7 were on Church Hill, Woodstock and one family group had fledged by 6/24 (JMN). 3 to 4 pairs bred in Winhall (WJN).

Another species apparently doing well is Eastern Phoebe which was found in 111 blocks, 80 of which contained confirmed nesters. 15 were seen in Vershire on 6/25 (WGE, GFE, RPr). Nicholson reports this species is down in her area in Woodstock, citing unsuccessful attempts to nest.

Ellison reports 18 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers in 4 blocks with an amazing maximum of 10 in Lewis on 7/9 (RPr, WGE). Overall, Atlas workers found this species in 15 blocks mostly in the Northern third of the state. One confirmation was obtained in a Hardwick block (LNM). Southern Vermont locations included Killington Peak (SBL), Winhall, Chester (WJN) and two locations in Wilmington (WJN).

Of the 43 blocks in which Alder Flycatcher was reported, only two have yielded confirmations: one on South Mountain, Bristol (WS) and the other in Saxtons River (DC). Birds appear to be distributed uniformly throughout all regions of the state.

In contrast, the Willow Flycatcher has a more limited distribution. It is unreported north of Hardwick where it was a probable nester (LNM). A total of 14 blocks produced 3 confirmed nestings. Norse noted that this bird is "spreading everywhere at higher elevation" in his area citing nestings in Winhall, South Londonderry, Gale Meadows and Chester.

Ellison's 204 Least Flycatchers in 15 blocks is indicative of its status. It has been found in 92 blocks of which 23 contained confirmed nesters. Surprisingly, it was found in only 7 blocks in the Champlain Valley. Young had fledged in Woodstock by 6/28 (JMN).

In comparison to Least Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee is equally well distributed having been found in 89 blocks statewide. However it seems to be less numerous as reflected in the totals submitted by Ellison who saw 63 in 13 blocks. Norse noted an increase in population for Pewees in his area, an encouraging sign after last year's low.

Except for the Missisquoi area (GFO) Olive-sided Flycatcher was absent from the Champlain Valley and virtually absent from the western fringe of the state. 33 blocks contained 6 confirmed nesters. Ellison found 13 in 9 blocks and observed fledgling young in Stratton on 7/22 (ALG, RPr, WGE). But in Winhall and vicinity, Norse reports a "disastrous crash" in numbers.

Possible and probable nesting from Colchester and Pantton respectively are the only Atlas records for Horned Lark. A pair each was sighted on 7/13 at Weybridge and Dead Creek (WS). This bird remains somewhat of a mystery in terms of its status in the summer and the extent of its range in Vermont. Birders should make a special effort to scope or carefully check fields in agricultural areas. Chances are you will hear it before you see it!

The Tree Swallow is ubiquitous throughout Vermont, common everywhere. It has been found in 126 blocks of which 97 yielded confirmation. Ellison found 139 in 12 blocks with a single day high count of 28 in Thetford on 7/2 (WGE, GFE, RPr). First fledglings emerged from nest boxes in Woodstock on 6/20. An albino - all white except for some light tan underneath - was seen in a flock of 50 at Hardwick (LNM) on 7/25 and another albino was seen in Pawlet (earlier date).

A colony nester, Bank Swallow occurs in good numbers in suitable habitat. It has been found in 51 blocks statewide. A maximum count of 50 on 6/17 in Tunbridge was submitted by Ellison who sighted a total of 124 in 7 blocks.

The Rough-winged Swallow which is near the northern limit of its range in Vermont appears to be more widely distributed in the southern half of the state. Only 6 of the 25 blocks in which this species was found were located in the northern part of the state and none were located in Essex County. Norse found an active nest on June 4 in South Londonderry.

Barn Swallow may be the most common swallow in Vermont. It has been found in 125 blocks of which 107 produced confirmed nestings. Ellison found 322 birds in 14 blocks with a maximum of 46 on 6/18 in Tunbridge (GFE, WGE). The only fledged date submitted was 7/14 in Woodstock (JMN). At least 100 were seen 7/21 going to roost in the cattails at West Rutland Marsh (SBL and JDL).

Cliff Swallow is widely distributed throughout the state, but occurs most frequently within the Green Mountain region. It has been found in 46 blocks of which 38 yielded confirmation of nestings.

One of the very interesting patterns emerging from the Atlas Project is the apparent distribution of Purple Martin in Vermont. All sightings of this species were made in the Champlain Valley where Martins were seen in 14 blocks and confirmed in 13. Within the valley it probably deserves the status of locally common nester where houses have been provided.

Gray Jay, not surprisingly, was reported only from Essex County where it has been found in 2 blocks. Reports this year

include one of an adult and juvenile at Island Pond 6/18 (FO, RJ, SA) and 4 in Lewis on 7/6 (WGE, RPr) and a single juvenile bird in Lemineton 7/6 (WGE, RPr).

Blue Jay was commonly reported and has been found in 123 blocks evenly distributed among regions statewide. Ellison recorded 196 in 14 blocks and had high single day totals of 21 three separate times. Young had fledged in Woodstock 6/26 (JMN).

Common Raven has now been seen in 32 blocks scattered in each region of the state. The sightings in the Champlain Valley come from Hinesburg and Enosburg Falls (where it was confirmed (CT)); both locations are actually closer to the mountains than to the lake. Young birds were reported 6/16 in Winhall (WJN) and Ellison saw 6 including fledged young on 6/17 in Tunbridge (WGE, GFE).

Frequently and widely reported, Common Crow has been found in 113 blocks, 41 of which produced confirmations. Young were reported fledged as of 6/20 (WGE, GFE).

Black-capped Chickadee is certainly deserving of its status as an abundant bird statewide. Ellisons report 284 in 16 blocks. Atlas workers found them in 127 blocks and confirmed nestings in 82. Young had fledged in Tunbridge by 6/17 (WGE, GFE).

Boreal Chickadee was confirmed as a nester in Craftsbury in 1976 and in Lyndonville this year (ECR). All records originate from the north central and northeast highlands regions. Ellison saw 5 in 3 blocks in Essex County, all in early July.

Tufted Titmouse, rare in Vermont, has been confirmed in one Londonderry block and listed as possible in another (WJN). The only report of this species for this season was of single birds 6/28 in Chester and 7/5 in Londonderry (WJN).

Common in most of Vermont except in Essex County, the White-breasted Nuthatch was found in 98 blocks only two of which were located in the boreal wilds of the northeast highlands. 9 blocks surveyed by Ellison et. al. contained 33 individuals. Earliest fledged date reported was on 6/19 in Woodstock where Nicholson notes numbers down from last year; an assessment shared by Redden in South Strafford. Norse, on the other hand, reported good numbers this year in the Winhall-Londonderry area.

Oddly enough, Red-breasted Nuthatch has occurred much more frequently in Southern Vermont - about 2 to 1 (number of blocks located in south to blocks in north). Out of a total 84 blocks, confirmation was established in 33. The census seems to be that numbers were up this year; the Dyes report a family group of 14 on Mt. Philo, 8 were located on Killington (SBL), and numbers were very high in Londonderry (WJN).

In contrast to the previous species, Brown Creeper numbers were low (WJN) in the Winhall-Londonderry vicinity, and Ellison saw only 7 in 5 Atlas blocks. The distribution pattern indicates this species is more widely and commonly distributed in Southern Vermont. Only 9 of 40 blocks are located in Northern Vermont.

House Wren has been confirmed in 52 of 85 blocks in which it was found. Only 21 of the 85 blocks are located in Northern Vermont and a majority of these are in the Champlain Valley.

From most indications there was no shortage of Winter Wren in Northeastern Vermont. Ellison reported his highest single day total of 10 from Lewis on 7/9 (WGE, RPr). 6 blocks in Essex County produced this species. Statewide, a large share of the 47 blocks in which it was found were located, not unexpectedly, in the Green Mountain region. To a couple of observers Winter Wren numbers seemed low this year (FO, WJN); in fact, one (WJN) felt that numbers had decreased by 50-75%.

Clearly, the Long-billed Marsh Wren is most widely distributed in the Champlain Valley. A few were located in a scattering of blocks outside the Valley including blocks in Guildhall, Victory, West Rutland Marsh, Cavendish, Londonderry and Bellows Falls. 25+ were seen 6/30 at West Rutland Marsh and 30+ were seen 7/3 at Dead Creek (WJN).

The first Atlas confirmation of SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN was obtained at West Rutland Marsh on 7/21 when 4 were seen, some of which were carrying food (SBL, ALG, WGE, RPr, CSC).

Mockingbird has been found in 16 blocks, all of which are located in the eastern and western fringes of the state. It has been confirmed in blocks located in Burlington (BFG and GPG), Bellows Falls (DC), and Brattleboro (LPM). In recent years, this species has been extending its range northward. Not only do the eastern and western perimeters of the state offer barrier-free valleys through which to move, they typically have the mildest climates of all regions in the state.

Well distributed throughout the state, Gray Catbird has been located in 126 blocks and confirmed as a nester in 72. Ellison tallied 135 in 14 blocks including 20 in Thetford on 7/2. Earliest reported date for young was 6/17 (EE) and for fledglings on 6/24 (JMN) in Woodstock.

Brown Thrasher appears to be widely distributed statewide with birds reported in 85 blocks. Numbers in her area in Woodstock were reported reduced (JMN). Otherwise, no strong feelings about relative density were aired in reports. The Ellisons sighted 39 in 8 blocks with a single day high of 9 on 6/18 in Tunbridge.

A total of 121 of 146 blocks contained confirmed nesting American Robins. 525 individuals in 15 blocks were tallied by the Ellisons.

Almost as frequently reported from Atlas blocks is the Wood Thrush which was found in 111 blocks. Earliest fledged date submitted was 6/30 in Springfield (EE, REP).

In the Londonderry area, Hermit Thrush numbers were reported to be reduced by 50% (WJN) from last year. Elsewhere, this species has been sighted in 89 blocks and confirmed in 28. Ellison sighted 51 in 14 blocks with a single-day high of 12 on 7/7 in Moran (WGE, RPr). One bird in a Chester block built its nest on 7/9 in a clearing overgrown with fern, hardhack and blackberry, about 10 to 15 feet from the edge of the woods (HSP, REP, EE et. al.).

Found predominantly in the Green Mountain region at higher elevations and in northern boreal forest, the Swainson's Thrush has been reported in 34 blocks and confirmed in 6. It has been unreported from the eastern foothills and Connecticut River Valley. Indications are that it did well in 1977 as suggested by Schultz's assessment of its status on Camel's Hump as "extremely common" and by Ellison's tally of 67 individuals in 7 blocks.

Gray-cheeked Thrush has yet to be confirmed in the 7 Atlas blocks in which it has been found. 4 individuals were seen on Camel's Hump, 6/12 (CSZ); 2 were sighted atop Monadnock Mt. in Lemington, 7/6 (WGE, RPR). One on 7/4 on Stratton Mountain and a probable breeder on Maëric Mt. (WJN) round out the reports submitted.

The Ellisons and Rick Prum sighted an amazing 263 Veerys in 14 blocks including 47 on 6/25 in Vershire. Atlas work has produced 34 confirmations in 107 blocks.

Eastern Bluebird was widely and commonly distributed in most central and southern blocks where bird houses have been erected. While Norse found Bluebird to be very rare this year in the Londonderry area, Prum found them to be "surprisingly common" in the central part of the state. In northern Vermont it seems to be more sparsely distributed.

Sightings of Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher continue to proliferate from one year to the next. So far, 6 Atlas blocks have been found to contain this species including Mt. Philo, Lewis Creek, Dead Creek, Bomoseen, Bellows Falls, and Broad Brook Estuary in Brattleboro. In addition, pairs were seen in Milton 6/12 (WGE et. mult. al.) and again 6/22 (JJD, MCD) and on 6/30 along Otter Creek in Vergennes (JJD, MCD).

Atlas data so far has indicated that Golden-crowned Kinglet is most commonly distributed in the Green Mountain Region and across the northern tier of highlands which stretch across the upper third of the state, from the main spine of mountains east to the Connecticut River. It is virtually unknown in the Champlain Valley or the Connecticut River Valley. Ellison reported 26 in 7 blocks which he covered with a single day high of 6 in Bradford on 7/19.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet is one of a few birds which reaches the southern limit of its range in Vermont. Interestingly, the two confirmations obtained so far are from West Rutland and Sunderland, both in southern Vermont. In addition, almost half of the 16 blocks in which it has been found are located in the southern half of the state. Although it is considered a regular breeder in Vermont, the 5th Edition of AOU checklist of North American Birds does not list this species as a nester here.

Cedar Waxwing was very commonly and widely distributed throughout the state. The Ellisons and Prum found 179 in 15 blocks including 41 in Vershire on 6/25. Elsewhere, it was discovered in 117 blocks and confirmed in 62.

First Atlas confirmation of Loggerhead Shrike nesting was obtained at Dead Creek on 6/21 when Pistorius found an adult feeding 3 recently fledged young. Some of the family group remained through 8/1 before disappearing. A possible nest was obtained in Monkton (LBI) and sightings of single birds were made on 6/13 and 6/19 in Ferrisburg and North Ferrisburg (JJD, MCD).

Yellow-throated Vireo has been located in 25 blocks primarily in the southern half of the state. Ellison recorded 34 in 4 blocks with an astounding 10 on 6/17 in Tunbridge (WGE, GFE). Prum reports this species was found commonly in the deciduous opening along Lake Morey and two males were heard most of the summer on Lake Dunmore (WS). This bird appears to be not so uncommon as previous records indicate.

Not surprisingly, Atlas workers in the Champlain Valley have not discovered any evidence of nesting Solitary Vireo. 61 blocks in more mountainous regions however indicate this species is reasonably common elsewhere in the state. Ellison and Prum found this to be the most common Vireo in parts of the Northeast Kingdom; they recorded 10 on 7/7 in Morgan.

The most common Vireo, and perhaps the most abundant bird in the state, is the Red-eyed Vireo which has been found in 128 blocks. Ellison found a staggering 781 in 15 blocks with 120 on 6/18 in Tunbridge (WGE, GFE).

In contrast, the Philadelphia Vireo has been located in only 6 blocks and has yet to be confirmed by Atlas workers. Sightings this summer include singing male in Vershire on 6/25 (WGE, RPR) and one on two occasions 6/25 and 6/28 in South Strafford (HR). One in Thetford on 7/2 (GFE) and one seen well on 6/16 in Island Pond (FO, SA) round out the list of sightings.

Warbling Vireo has been found in 61 blocks and confirmed as a nester in 14. It seems to be widely distributed in the Champlain Valley where it is fairly common in Middlebury (WS) and in the Connecticut River Valley. It were seen in Tunbridge on 6/18 (GFE, WGE) for a seasonal high count.

Interesting statistics have been compiled by Doug Kibbe based on numbers of individuals of Warblers sighted by the Ellisons et. al. in their Atlas work. Below is a summary of the results; the first column represents raw data (i.e., the total number of a given species) and the second column is the % of the total (2037). Those left blank in column two represent percentages less than 1%.

Bl. and W Warbler	117	5.7%
Golden-W Warbler	1	
Blue-W Warbler	3	
Tennessee Warbler	1	
Nashville Warbler	38	1.8
Northern Parula	8	
Yellow Warbler	91	4.4
Magnolia Warbler	137	6.7
Cape May Warbler	1	
Bl.-thr. Bl. Warbler	64	3.1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	69	3.3
Bl.-thr. Gr. Warbler	69	3.3
Cerulean Warbler	7	
Blackburn. Warbler	82	4.0
Chestnut-si Warbler	223	10.9
Blackpoll Warbler	19	
Pine Warbler	1	
Prairie Warbler	6	
Ovenbird	224	10.9
N. Waterthrush	5	
L. Waterthrush	10	
Mourning Warbler	19	
Yellowthroat	354	17.3
Wilson's Warbler	2	
Canada Warbler	118	5.7
Am. Redstart	368	18.0

The Black and White Warbler has been found in 84 blocks statewide or 45% of all blocks done so far. No trends were detected in reports. Nicholson indicated that there were "average" numbers in Woodstock and Norse substantiates what Atlas data indicates; that it was a widespread breeder everywhere.

Three blocks were found to contain Golden-winged Warbler, two in Saxtons River and one at West Rutland Marsh. It was confirmed in Saxtons River (DC). A few birds were discovered in the historic breeding location in Sudbury (AP et. al.).

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER has now been confirmed as a nester in 2 of 3 blocks. A nesting pair has been located near Saxtons River. In addition a Blue-winged and Brewster's Warbler pair, the second confirmation in the state in as many years, has been discovered in Rice's Mills (WGE, GFE, RPR). Across the state near Arlington a single bird was observed on 7/22 (WGE, ALG, RPR, CSC) as a possible nester.

A singing male TENNESSEE WARBLER responded vigorously to tape and seemed to occupy territory at Lewis Pond in the Northeast Kingdom on 7/9 (WGE, RPR). In addition a possible nesting was obtained near Hardwick (LNM).

Nashville Warbler has been found in 49 blocks widely distributed outside of the Champlain Valley.

Northern Parula, found in 27 blocks mostly in northern regions and in mountainous sections of southern Vermont, was unreported from the eastern and western foothills and reported only from Hinesburg in the Champlain Valley and from St. Johnsbury in the east central region. In Londonderry, Norse reports it as a "scarce" nester.

Yellow Warbler has been located in 57.3% of all Atlas blocks surveyed so far and yet Ellison reports that in blocks he did, it constituted only 4.4% of the total Warbler population. Other Warblers - Chestnut-sided, Ovenbird, Yellowthroat, Redstart - found in more than 50% of the blocks surveyed statewide, also composed at least 10% of the total numbers of warblers compiled by Ellison. An adult female migrant, banded 5/22/75 in Woodstock was recovered dead in Fair Haven on 6/18/77. This poses some interesting questions about migration routes and/or possible nesting locations in different years.

Ellison hit the jackpot for Magnolia Warblers finding 137 in 15 blocks including 23 in Lewis on 7/9. Included in the Lewis total were some fledglings. Norse found them almost as abundant in the Londonderry area; he labelled them as "common" and reported they were present everywhere especially at higher elevations.

Aside from the 1975 confirmation of Cape May Warbler nesting in Sandgate, three blocks in northern Vermont produced a possible nesting (WGE, RPR, EWC), and a confirmed nesting near Hardwick (LNM). The possible nesting was obtained in Lewis where a singing male was present on 7/6.

Black-throated Blue Warbler has been found in 66 blocks of which 18 have been confirmed. Ellison saw 16 on 7/9 in Lewis in the Northeast Kingdom. By contrast, Norse reported them widely but thinly distributed in southern Vermont.

Yellow-rumped Warbler was widely distributed in 76 blocks throughout the state. Norse found them "fairly common" and Ellison reported them to be 3.3% of his warbler total.

In sections of southern Vermont, Black-throated Green Warbler was found to be a fairly common nester (WJN). This also applies elsewhere. Ellison and Prum reported 16 in Lewis on 7/9 for a single day high for the period.

Certainly one of the highlights of this nesting season was the discovery of a nesting colony of CERULEAN WARBLERS on the Lamaille River on 6/12 (WGE, CVB, et. mult. al.). A total of 7 individuals were seen including 5 males and 2 females, one of which was sitting on a nest. The colony is located in tall river bottom trees. This of course represents the first established nesting for Vermont for a bird which is rarely seen at all. Two possible explanations - merely speculation - in regard to the origin of the colony come to mind: one that the colony originated from the north via the St. Lawrence Seaway and colonies in southwestern Quebec and Ontario; or that they originated from the south via the Mohawk and Hudson River Valleys and colonies in southern or central western New York State.

Blackburnian Warbler has been located in 64 blocks or 34.6% of the total. Norse reports this species is an uncommon nester contained primarily to hemlocks. Ellison found it to constitute about 4% of his warbler totals.

Quite widespread and downright common in some blocks, Chestnut-sided Warbler has been found in 108 blocks and confirmed in 52.

At the other extreme, a probable nesting in Hardwick (LNM) is the only Atlas report of Bay-breasted Warbler submitted so far.

A singing male, behaving territorially, was seen on Stratton Mountain at 2700 feet on 7/4 (WJN).

Blackpoll Warbler has been confirmed as a nester in Averill (WGE), Hardwick (LNM), and at Wheeler Mt-Lyndonville (ECR). Elsewhere it has been reported in 8 other blocks in the southern half of the state always at high elevation. Ellison reported 19 in 3 blocks including 12 in Lemington on 7/6. A single bird seen on 6/12 in Milton was likely a late migrant (WGE, BSE, ORE, et. al.).

Certainly one of the most common warblers in Vermont is the Ovenbird which has been located in 108 blocks and confirmed in 33. Ellison reports this species represented 10.9% of all warblers tallied this year. 36 were seen in Vershire and Corinth on 6/25 (GFE, WGE, RPR). Several pairs nested in Bristol on South Mountain (WS). In Londonderry, they were common and widespread (WJN), and no fewer than 9 pairs took up residence on Church Hill in Woodstock (JMN).

Prairie Warbler, which reaches the northern limit of its range in southern Vermont has been found in 4 blocks located near Springfield (JPe, MPe), Saxtons River (DC) and Broad Brook Estuary in Brattleboro (WJN). It has already been confirmed in the Springfield area where 6 were seen on 6/29 (WGE, EE).

Pine Warbler has been found in 4 Atlas blocks and various sighting reports came from scattered locations around the state. The northernmost block in which it was seen was at Wheeler Mt.

in Lyndonville (ECR); other locations included Hinesburg (JJA), Woodstock (MCH) and Saxtons River (DC). One was located high in cottonwoods in Milton on 6/12 (WGE, ORE, BSE, et. al.); another was heard singing at Button Bay State Park and at Lake Dunmore throughout July (WS). Small colonies were reported at Wilder (WGE) and at Lake Morey (RPR).

Northern Waterthrush has been located in 34 Atlas blocks scattered throughout the state and in equal numbers north and south. Six were banded throughout the season in Plainfield (MFM). Three pairs were found near Beaver Meadow Bog in Bristol (WS) and 2 to 3 pairs bred in the Winhall area (WJN). Three were sighted in Corinth on 6/25 (GFE, WGE, RPR).

Almost all records of Louisiana Waterthrush have come from the southern half of the state where 18 of 20 blocks are located. A possible nestling in Alburg (GFO) and a confirmed nestling in Bristol (WS) are the only Atlas records thus far from the northern half of the state. Fledglings were seen as early as 6/20 in Tunbridge (GFE, WGE).

Mourning Warbler seems to have had a good year. Atlas workers have found this species in 31 blocks throughout the state including one block near Milton in the Champlain Valley (CR) where it is rare. Nichols reported "more records in Southern Vermont" than ever before and in the Winhall area at least 5 pairs nested (WJN). It was a common breeder in logged out areas on South Mountain in Bristol (WS) and Schultz found 3 resident singing males on Camel's Hump. In the Northeast Kingdom, this species was common in overgrown slashes in Moran and Lewis (RPR, WGE). Sightings come from Stockbridge on 6/4 (EH), from Burlington on 6/12 (WGE, CSZ, RPR) and from Hartford on 6/9 (WGE et. al.).

Perhaps the most common Warbler in the state is the appropriately named Common Yellowthroat. Ellison tallied 354 in 15 blocks or 17.3% of all his Warbler sightings. Included in this total were 54 seen on 6/25 in Vershire and Corinth (WGE, GFE, RPR). They were nearly as common elsewhere as well as they have been located in 130 blocks or 70% of all blocks done so far.

Wilson's Warbler has been confirmed as a nester for the Atlas Project. On 7/8 Ellison and Prum located 2 in Bloomfield where a male was seen carrying food to a fledgling. (Ed. Note: This species has not been confirmed as a nester in New York State until the summer of 1978).

Canada Warbler has been reported in 65 blocks statewide but less commonly from the western fringe of the state. It was reported as common in Winhall (WJN), on Killington (SBL) and in the Chelsea-Tunbridge area where 18 were seen on 6/17 (WGE, GFE, HMB).

American Redstart was the most common bird in Atlas blocks Ellison did. He recorded 368 in 15 blocks or 18% of all his warbler sightings. It was common elsewhere as well, with reports from 118 blocks throughout the state.

Bobolink numbers seemed to be up some this summer. Norse noted an increase in the Winhall area and this editor sighted more in the Champlain Valley this year than in the past. It has been recorded in 95 blocks statewide.

Apparently not as common as the Bobolink, the Eastern Meadowlark has been confirmed in 31 of 67 blocks statewide. Ellison reported only 23 in 7 blocks and nearly half of that figure came from Chelsea and Tunbridge on 6/17 (GFE, WGE). Norse wrote that they are "declining all over here" and noted they were just about absent in Winhall. In the Champlain Valley they were "fairly common" (WS).

Certainly very widespread and common, the Red-winged Blackbird has been found in 137 blocks and confirmed in 97. Ellison reported 479 in 14 blocks. Fledglings were reported as early as 6/12 in Woodstock (JMN).

As reported in the spring "Records" the first record of ORCHARD ORIOLE nestling in Vermont since 1907 was established in Woodstock by Carol R. Powell. Nestling apparently was successful as young were heard in the nest and adults were observed until 6/26 after which they were not observed again. This record represents a pleasant but not altogether unexpected surprise in light of several reports of sightings in the spring and summer of 1975 and 1976.

Northern Oriole, which has been confirmed in 67 of 110 blocks statewide, was reported by some observers to be down in numbers. In South Strafford where they have nested in the past, only one sighting, on 6/14, was made (HR). Numbers were lower in Woodstock as well (JMN) but in the Champlain Valley near Middlebury it was described as common. Fledglings were observed as early as 6/25 (JMN) in Woodstock.

Rusty Blackbird has been found in 16 blocks most of which are located in northern Vermont. Oatman reports lower numbers this year in the Northeast Kingdom, but Prum and Ellison found it locally common east of Island Pond. In southern Vermont where this species is uncommon, three were seen in Arlington (WGE, RPR, ALG) and at least 2 pair nested at Gale Meadows (WJN).

Throughout the state, Common Grackle was found in 121 blocks and confirmed in 71. Young had fledged in Chelsea as early as 6/17 (WGE, GFE).

Equally as widespread as the Common Grackle, the Brown-headed Cowbird was commonly reported and found in 100 blocks. High count for the period was in Royalton on 6/22 when 29 including fledglings were seen (WGE, GFE).

Scarlet Tanager seemed to do well this year after some suggested its numbers were below average in 1976. In Winhall (WJN) and in Bristol (WS), it was seen rather frequently and Ellison reported 80 in 15 blocks with a single-day high of 14 on 7/2 in the Northford. Statewide, Atlas workers have reported it in 87 blocks.

Cardinal appears well established in the southern half of the state, somewhat more frequently in the eastern and western foothill regions. The northernmost record outside of the Champlain Valley where it has become fairly common as far north as Colchester, comes from Wheeler Mt.-Lyndonville and from Victory-Burke (ECR), both areas accessible via the Connecticut River Valley. So far, 58 blocks have been found to contain this species.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak was found in 98 blocks widely distributed throughout the state. In Bristol, parents were ob-

served feeding young on 6/13 and the first fledgling was seen in Randolph on 7/1 (EWC). Ellison had 77 in 14 blocks and reported fledglings in Moran on 7/7.

In the Champlain Valley near Middlebury, Indigo Bunting was reported common in suitable habitat everywhere (WS), and Ellison found 72 in 9 blocks and an amazing 18 in Tunbridge on 6/18. Elsewhere, Norse described nesting in the Winhall region as "spotty and erratic at the higher elevations." Atlas workers have confirmed nestling in 27 of 80 blocks.

One of the most cooperative rarities ever to be discovered in Vermont was a vocal and very visible DICKCISSEL in West Addison which perched in his favorite elm tree and sang for dozens of birding enthusiasts from the VINS Bird Conference (WS, FO, et. mult. al.). First found on 5/21 by T. Arny from Massachusetts, this bird appeared to establish territory, and was last seen 6/15 (WS). This is the first record in the state since October 6, 1974 when one was seen at Dead Creek.

An interesting distribution of Evening Grosbeak seems to be emerging from the Atlas data. 4 blocks in extreme northern Vermont (Highgate, Island Pond, Lyndon State College, Victory) and 6 blocks in southern Vermont (Cavendish, Londonderry, Saxtons River (3), and Bellows Falls) constitute the sum of all Atlas records thus far. Oddly none have been sighted in between, even in mountainous areas. Possible early migrants include a small flock in Plainfield on 7/15 (MFM) and a single bird in Pittsfield on 7/27 (WGF).

After the incredible winter invasion of Purple Finches the summer population seemed to thrive. Observers discovered this species in no fewer than 88 blocks including 8 from various locations in the Champlain Valley. It was common in all areas near Londonderry (WJN) and 67 were seen in 14 blocks in east central and northern Vermont (WGE, GFE, RPR). Fledged young were seen as early as 6/28 in Bristol (WS).

House Finch, which has recently invaded the state and was established as a nester just last year, now has been found in 5 blocks in southern Vermont in Wallingford, Saxtons River, Bennington, and Brattleboro.

Nesting has been confirmed in Hardwick for Pine Siskin (LNM) and possible nesting has been established at Delectable Mt. (EH), Wallingford (PDU) (Ed. Note: where nesting has occurred, summer 1974), Londonderry (WJN) and Hidden Lake-Brattleboro (JNE).

Atlas data substantiate what most observers know: that American Goldfinch is common to abundant in most localities. It has been found in 129 blocks distributed throughout the state; Ellison reported 215 in 15 blocks with a seasonal high of 30 in Stockbridge on 6/21 (WGE, GFE, HMB).

Red Crossbill makes its first summer "Records" appearance since 1974. Two birds were observed in the top of a 40 foot spruce in Rice's Mills on 7/19 (HR); and birds were seen moving overhead on 7/24, 7/28 and 7/31 in Winhall (WJN).

Other than historical nesting in Averill and possible nestings in Guildhall (WGE, RPR) and Winhall (WJN), White-winged Crossbill continues to be found only very uncommonly in summer.

Norse's assessment of the status of Rufous-sided Towhee as widespread in small numbers seems to be supported by Ellison, who observed 35 individuals in 9 blocks, and by other Atlas workers who found Towhees in 82 blocks primarily in the southern half of the state. Because of the total absence of Towhees in suitable habitat in the Dead Creek block, Pastorius wonders whether they require a certain minimum elevation.

Interestingly, Atlas sightings of Savannah Sparrow are distributed uniformly among all regions. It is quite common - even abundant - in the Dead Creek area of the Champlain Valley; and Ellison found 15, including fledglings, near Lemington on 7/6 (WGE, RPR), suggesting it was reasonably common there as well. Norse, however, reports it as declining in Winhall where it was absent entirely.

Very rare in Vermont, HENSLOW'S SPARROW was well observed in Quechee and reported as a possible nester (ALG). This represents the first summer record since 1975.

Atlas data indicates that Vesper Sparrow has a widely scattered and limited distribution. Observers reported this species in 16 blocks, uniformly distributed among all regions except the Northeast Highlands. Ellison found 10 in 3 blocks, 6 of which were sighted in Tunbridge on 6/20.

Numerous in most mountainous sections of the state, Dark-eyed Junco has been established as a nester in each of the 7 regions. Overall, observers found it in 76 blocks and confirmed nestling in 29.

All indications are that Chipping Sparrow, which has been found in 106 blocks throughout the state, was in average or above average numbers in 1977. First fledglings reported were out of the nest on 6/20 in Tunbridge where as many as 23 birds were seen (WGE, GFE).

While found in only two blocks in Essex County, Field Sparrow was widely but thinly distributed in suitable habitat throughout the rest of the state. Observers sighted it in 68 blocks and confirmed nestling in 21. In 9 of the 15 blocks Ellison et. al. did, they discovered 37 with a single day maximum of 13 in Tunbridge.

Emerging as one of the most common resident sparrows is the White-throated Sparrow which has been confirmed as a nester in 43 of 113 blocks. While it is uncommon in the Champlain Valley, it has been confirmed at Missisquoi (2 locations), and near Hinesburg (JJA). In addition, it has been found near Burlington, on Mt. Philo, and in Ferrisburg where one male sang most of the summer (AP). Elsewhere it appears quite common especially at higher elevation and in the Northeast Kingdom.

Lincoln's Sparrow: No observers have found evidence of nesting in 9 blocks, 7 of which are located close to or within Essex County. A possible nesting in Royalton (WGE, GFE) and a probable nesting in Stratton (ALG, WGE, RPR) constitute the only southern Vermont Atlas records so far. Oatman noted 6 to 8 pairs near Island Pond and in Bloomfield on 7/8, Ellison and Prum recorded 11.

Scattered throughout the state, apparently in modest numbers, Swamp Sparrow was confirmed as a nester in 20 of 58 blocks. Near Winhall, nestling was local in suitable habitat and at Dead Creek there were small numbers present (WJN and AP). Ellison

recorded 37 in 7 blocks with a maximum of 12 in Mordan on 7/7 (WGE, RPr).

Song Sparrow was present almost everywhere in good numbers. Observers have found it in 134 blocks of which 98 yielded confirmed nestings. Ellisons recorded an amazing 411 birds in 15 blocks with 52 on 6/17 in Chelsea and Tunbridge alone. There were 8 territorial males in Woodstock and 1 pair raised two broods (JMN). Farther south it was listed as a common nester in Winhall (WJN).

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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 cards promptly at the end of each season. This publication is only as complete as you make it. If you need sighting cards, write VINS, Woodstock 05091. Or, call us at 802-457-2779.

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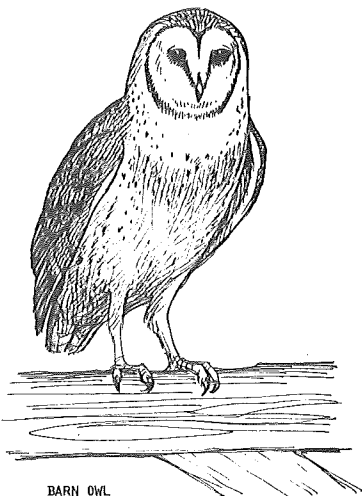
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