

Records of Vermont Birds

SPRING MIGRATION 1979

1 MARCH - 31 MAY

FRANK OATMAN, SEASONAL EDITOR

The springs of 1976 and 1977 were generally early, with many earliest-ever arrival dates; the spring of 1978 was considered late. This was the spring, appropriately and at last, that returned more or less to normal. A majority of migrant species returned about when expected since the weather was generally mild, each month's mean temperature was only slightly above average, and few storms or wet frontal systems intervened to seriously back up migration. There were, however, some interesting weather effects and a truly remarkable number of rare species seen.

The rapid melting and subsiding of rivers in March provided few stopover habitats for waterfowl here and allowed them to move quickly through Vermont to the open waters of breeding areas farther north. As a result, waterfowl migration seemed quite poor. Landbird migrants took advantage of the mild March weather to move back in good numbers.

Though the first two weeks of April averaged a bit cooler and wetter than usual, the weather was not bad enough to hold back a vanguard of the migrants due at that time, and the weather was mild and favorable for migration after the 21st. A few early arrival records were set.

The first week of May was again a bit cooler than normal, with winds adverse to migration and with four days of precipitation at Burlington. Birds seemed to be only trickling in. Then on May 8th the winds shifted to the south, bringing a flood of warm air (up to 92°F at Burlington on the 9th) and a flood of migrants. Many observers reported good pushes May 7-11; notes I wrote on the 9th are representative: "Suddenly yesterday - with the onset of the first really warm weather and coinciding almost exactly with the first bursting out of leaves and catkins from their buds - the migrants begin to pour in, all in a rush." May records of WORM-EATING WARBLER and YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER, both southerly species very rare in Vermont, were probably produced by the "overshoot" phenomenon, when migrating landbirds ride such a wave of warm air too far north.

It is difficult to account for the veritable flood of rare shorebirds reported, including the state's third WILLET and fourth WHIMBREL. In addition, Black-bellied Plover, Wilson's and Northern Phalaropes, and most of the more usual species made it the best spring for shorebirds in recent memory. The pages of the following report are liberally sprinkled with other rarities, including a well-described Golden Eagle; Hawk Owl, Great Gray Owl, and Red-bellied Woodpecker left over from winter; and a suspiciously late Northern Three-toed Woodpecker.

Populations of birds fluctuate often and for a wide variety of reasons, and by no means are all reductions terminal. Nonetheless, we should attempt to monitor species believed down. The following were reported in lower than usual numbers: Pied-billed Grebe, Cattle Egret, American Bittern, Broad-winged Hawk, Barred Owl, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Alder Flycatcher, Winter Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Loggerhead Shrike, Eastern Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird, Vesper Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Field Sparrow, and White-crowned

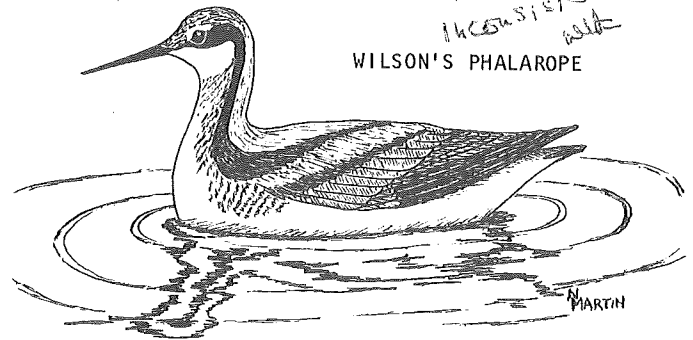
Sparrow.

Numbers of the following species were considered up this year (some are clearly on a longer range climb): Turkey Vulture, Eastern Kingbird, Willow Flycatcher, Tufted Titmouse, Mockingbird, American Robin, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Bobolink, Northern Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and House Finch.

Poor weather on May 21 hampered both Big Day teams, but the south (Doug Kibbe, Annette Gosnell, Don Clark, and Whit Nichols) managed to edge out the north (Frank Oatman, George and Walter Ellison, Wayne Scott) for the first time, 123 species to 122.

*Managing Editor's Note:

A task for the newly created State Records Committee apparently should be to review previously published state records and agree on their status. According to the records listed in *Spear's Birds of Vermont* and records previously published in *Records of Vermont Birds*, this spring's Willet is the fourth state record; the Whimbrel the fifth; the Wilson's Phalarope the seventh; and the Yellow-throated Warbler the fifth.



WILSON'S PHALAROPE

LOONS AND GREBES

A Common Loon April 8 on Lake Champlain (WS, CSz, RRo) was the first seen, after which 37 were reported for the season. Concentrations of 7 on Kent Pond, Sherburne (WGE, GFE) and of 11 on Woodward Reservoir, Plymouth (SBL, LHP, BLR) on May 26 were unusual for spring migration. The one record of Red-necked Grebe (4 on Lake Bomoseen, MWG,BJG) was about par for the season. Only 2 Horned Grebes were reported: 1 on April 1 at Burlington (BSE, ORE) and 1 on April 29 at Barre Reservoir (LNM). Curious indeed was the complete absence of Pied-billed Grebe reports. This editor made a special search of Lake Memphremagog, where they are usually back and breeding by late April, and could find none.

CORMORANT AND WADING BIRDS

The Double-crested Cormorant, scarce in spring, was reported twice: 1 on May 8 at Button Bay (WJN) and 7 on May 26 at Maidstone (LNM, MCH). Early reports of Great Blue Herons, which may have overwintered, were singles March 5 at Barnard (MLW) and March 30 at Cornwall (AP). Most areas recorded first arrivals between the first and third weeks of April, and numbers seemed average. Green Herons were reported in small numbers, as usual, from April 23 on. With only one report, the Cattle Egret was down drastically from the last three springs: 1 seen May 12, North Ferrisburg (JID, MCD). It would be interesting to know if this represents a decline in the species' Lake Champlain breeding population or some curious lapse in observer coverage.

Three Great Egrets were reported: 1 the week of April 27 at Springfield (GK et al.); 1 on May 12 at Panton (AP, MCD, JID, et al.); and 1 in southern Vermont May 26 (CDK, DeC). For the third spring in a row, a single SNOWY EGRET was seen - 1 on April 21 at Springfield (Gladys Kidder et al.). Small numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons were reported, beginning with 1 on April 17 at West Woodstock (SHO). All other reports were from the Champlain Valley. As usual the Least Bittern was found only at West Rutland Marsh, with 2 on May 26 (SBL, WGE, GFE). American Bitterns first appeared April 24 (2) at Lake Bomoseen (JRC) and April 25 (1) at Winhall (WJN), after which there were scattered reports, apparently in lower than usual numbers, especially so in the northeastern part of the state.

WATERFOWL

Canada Geese probably overwintered, with up to 200 at Converse Bay, Lake Champlain from early March (JJA); but most areas reported first migrants March 17 - April 3. The only notable count was 1,000 on April 8 at Weybridge (WS, CSz, RRo). Snow Geese were reported in small numbers March 20 - May 12, with a high count of only 125+ (at Craftsbury April 12, JW). By now Vermonters should be accustomed to rather drastic seasonal fluctuations in numbers of geese seen. This spring's low counts - in contrast to the highs of 1978 - were probably produced by poor viewing conditions for observers (overcast skies) and little lingering in Vermont by the geese, rather than by reductions in Canada and Snow Goose populations. It is also possible that in certain years the geese move north by routes that largely bypass the state. Mallards and Black Ducks began to move back in numbers the last week in March, as expected, though they did not reach the Craftsbury area until April 3 (FO, JW). Numbers of each species seemed about normal, with highs April 8 of 100 Mallards and 150 Blacks in the Champlain Valley (WS, CSz, RRo). Eleanor Ellis reports that she saw fewer Black and Mallard hybrids this spring than last, but otherwise data on hybridization were lacking. Mallards had young by May 31 at Lake Memphremagog (FO) and Blacks by May 26 at West Rutland Marsh (SBL). For the first spring since 1973, no Gadwalls were reported. Pintails were recorded March 17 to May 6, with highs of 50 on the Lemon Fair March 17 and 22 (JSA). Away from the Champlain Valley, Pintails were reported only from Springfield, Herrick's Cove, and Newbury. Cornwall had a few Green-winged Teal as early as the 2nd week of March, though no numbers until the Lemon Fair opened up again the week of March 18 (AP). A scattering of late March to early April first reports came in from across southern Vermont. Though migration continued at least until April 25, no concentrations greater than 6 to 8 birds were reported. Blue-winged Teal were first seen March 24 at Grafton and Springfield and March 25 at Cornwall, after which there were only scattered reports of small numbers through early May except for one notable concentration of 45 on the Connecticut River near Newbury on April 16 (TL). A nest with 11 eggs was found May 31 at Lake Memphremagog (FO et al.). The American Wigeon had its poorest Vermont showing in at least 6 springs: only 16 birds were reported in 5 sightings, March 31 to May 12. It is not surprising that the usually uncommon Northern Shoveler was reported only 3 times this lousy year for waterfowl - April 8, 4 to 5 at Weybridge (WS, CSz, RRo); May 1, 5 at Salisbury (WS); and May 12, 2 at Dead Creek (AP). A pair of Wood Ducks March 15 at Vernon (BBo) were the earliest ever reported. Several areas had firsts April 7 - 17, though migration apparently peaked around mid-April, with highs of 50 on April 14 at Springfield Meadows (SBL, ALG, DPK) and 15 on April 16 at Newbury (TL). Norse considered Woodies scarce in the Winhall area, but Oatman found numbers still slowly climbing in the Black and Barton river systems. The Redhead, unreported the last 2 spring seasons, was seen once: April 13 at Button Bay (no number given, KAF). Ring-necked Ducks were down this spring, with only 9 sightings received, April 8 to April 29. Highs were 30+ at Lake Bomoseen April 18 (JRC) and 12 at Hubbardton April 28 (SBL et al.). Converse Bay in Charlotte had 1-4 Canvasbacks March 25 - April 3 (JJA). There was only one other report, 20-25 in Button Bay April 8 (WS, CSz, RRo). Greater Scaups were seen on March 25 and April 2 at Converse Bay, Charlotte (4 each time - JJA) and on April 29 on Lake Bomoseen (3 seen, JRC). Lesser Scaup went unreported for the first spring in 6 years. Common Goldeneyes apparently overwintered and may have migrated through early, as spring reports (scattered between March 20 and April 21) were few and of very low numbers, with a paltry 23 maximum on March 25 at Converse Bay (JJA). A Bufflehead March 10 at the mouth of the Winooski (BSE, ORE) was early, after which the species was reported in small numbers March 25 to May 8, for a total of 28+ for the season. There were 2 reports of Oldsquaw - 1 on April 8 at Oakledge in Burlington (BSE, ORE) and 1 on April 25 at Glen Lake, Fair Haven (BJG, HWG). A flock of 4 WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS seen May 31 on Lake Memphremagog's South Bay by Frank Oatman represents a quite late record of a species rare in spring. The Black Scoter, also rare in spring, was reported twice: 11 males on May 1 at Green River Reservoir (LNM) and 12-13 (5 males, rest females) on May 21 at Lapham Bay, Shoreham (DPK, DC, WDN, ALG). Also unusual was a male RUDDY DUCK, a rare species any season in Vermont, reported March 31 at Hartland by Eleanor Swaim; if correct, this represents the earliest record for the state. Only 8 Hooded Mergansers were reported, March 24 through the end of May, as birds moved to breeding areas in Vermont and farther north. Common Mergansers, which overwintered, began a movement into Vermont in February. They were reported in good numbers from many areas through May 23, with maximum counts of 50-55 on March 24 at Charlotte (JJA) and of 10 along mid-Lake Champlain April 8 (WS, CSz, RRo). In contrast, there were only 4 reports of Red-breasted Merganser, all from Lake Champlain, April 1 to May 8, for a total of 7 birds (BSE, ORE, WS, WJN).

JOURNAL RAPTORS

The results of the spring hawk watch have been separately published (Copies are available from VINS - send \$2 and a stamped, addressed envelope.) The first Turkey Vultures were seen March 20 at Rutland (AF) and South Newfane (BBo). Vultures reached the Springfield-Grafton area by March 24 (DC, GK, WK) and the Ripton area by March 31 (JSA), but the major movement occurred April 3 - 8 when a host of sightings were made throughout the species' Vermont breeding range. One seen on April 12 near Middlesex (NLN, LPr) and 4 on April 21 at Huntington (JJA) were near the present limit of normal range; 1 (no date given) this spring at Lake Willoughby (AOH) was extralimital. Maxima of 8-12 were reported, and the seasonal total was 75 (not counting hawk watches). Compare this to Vulture totals for 1978 (56), 1977 (50+), and 1976 (39). The first evidence of breeding in Vermont was obtained when Nancy Martin and party observed a pair copulating on a ledge atop Bald Mountain in Rutland. The usual smatter of Goshawk sightings (6 at hawk watch sites, 6 others) were reported. Bill Norse had a migrant Gos as early as March 4 at Winhall. Sharp-shinned Hawks probably overwintered in larger numbers than usual, so it's difficult to tell whether the 8 total March reports represent lingering or returning birds, but Norse believed 2 on March 7th at his Winhall hawk watch site to be migrants. Julie Nicholson saw Sharpies take a Blue Jay and a Starling at her Woodstock feeder in March. Migration seemed to peak the third week of April, with numbers continuing to

look good. Cooper's Hawks were reported throughout the season for totals of 11 away from hawk watches and 3 on watches - about par for the season. Red-tailed Hawks apparently overwintered in smaller than usual numbers, so the many first reports March 3 to 31 doubtless represent returning birds. A Red-tail was carrying nesting material at Woodstock by March 5 (ALG), though the White Rocks watch site had the seasonal maximum of 11 on April 21 (RWP). Ted Levin reported a partially albino Red-tail on April 16 south of Pompanoosic and an albino April 21 from Gile Mountain near Norwich, while Leonard Korzun reported a nest in use for 10 years near Shrewsbury (fide AFS). Fifteen Red-shouldered Hawks were reported away from hawk watch sites March 21 - May 21, with an additional 11 seen by hawk watchers. Two Broad-winged Hawks April 11 at Clarendon (LHP) were the earliest reported, with none thereafter until the April 21 hawk watch when 7 sites got only 8 birds. By the next day (April 22) Broad-wings were moving, as 3 hawk watches totaled 55 birds. Bill Norse (see hawk watch report) believed the major movement occurred April 23 - 30, however. Resident populations seemed down to Whit Nichols (Brattleboro area) and this editor (Northeast Kingdom). Only 1 Rough-legged Hawk was reported - March 18 at Ripton (JSA). Ted Levin submitted a convincing description of an immature GOLDEN EAGLE which he and his ornithology class (16 observers) saw on April 21 at the base of Gile Mountain in Norwich. Though this species is on Vermont's accidental list, at least a few must pass over the state since they are not infrequently seen in migration to our south. Observers should familiarize themselves with the diagnostic marks separating the plumages of this species from that of the immature Bald Eagle. James Stewart of Vermont Fish and Game reported 6 Bald Eagle sightings, April 26 - May 14, from Norwich, Springfield, Woodbury, East Charlotte, and Somerset, most of them by reliable observers. Eleven Marsh Hawks were seen away from hawk watches and an additional 4 on the watches, with the earliest March 29 at Lake Memphremagog (JDS). Thirty-six Osprey were reported, 8 on hawk watches, 28 otherwise, between April 13 and May 30, an average showing. The rare Peregrine Falcon was seen only once on April 7 by Lynn Erb in Jericho, who watched it dive into a flock of blackbirds. The Merlin was poorly reported with only 1 certain observation - 1 seen April 21 at Moscow (LNM et al.). American Kestrels doubtless overwintered, but birds March 5 at Rutland (MSG, LPr) and March 8 at Woodstock (ALG, SBL) were probably early migrants. Alan Pistorius found "numbers drifting back into the Champlain Valley by mid-March," and I reached Jericho by March 16 (FO, JW). Most observers spotted area firsts by the end of March, though a maximum of 22 at 3 sites on the April 22 hawk watch shows Kestrels were still migrating then.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

Ruffed Grouse populations seemed better than average to observers at Winhall (WJN) and Marlboro (WDN) but a bit down from last year's high in the Northeast Kingdom (FO). A Common Bobwhite, no doubt an escaped or released bird, was heard on May 21 at West Rutland Marsh (DPK, ALG, WDN, DC), and a Ring-necked Pheasant of similar origin was seen on April 5 at Shelburne by Wayne Scott. The Gray Partridge flushed by Bill Norse north of Herrick's Cove on April 23 was also a likely escapee as Vermont's only resident population occurs on Lake Champlain's larger islands. About 65 Wild Turkeys were reported from their main range in southwestern Vermont, including a female with young, on May 27 (RWP) and up to 25 at a time at Clarendon (LHP).

RAILS AND GALLINULES

The Virginia Rail and the Sora were very poorly reported, so the May 12 first records of each species at Lake Memphremagog (FO, LNM, JW) mean virtually nothing. We continue to need a great deal of work on all the Rallidae family members in Vermont - arrival and departure dates, dates of eggs and young, area population counts, etc. Much of this work is possible only by canoe or rowboat; but even land-bound observers can contribute a lot by checking likely marsh habitat throughout the season and carefully recording (and submitting!) dates and numbers of any rails, gallinules, or coots (bitterns too) they hear or see. There were only 3 reports of the scarce Common Gallinule: Frank Oatman had up to 6-7 (a new high for the area) at Lake Memphremagog's South Bay May 21 onward; and Gallinules were detected in southern Vermont by two parties on the May 26th Birdathon (DPK, ALG, WGE, GFE). J. Carroll reported a pair of AMERICAN COOTS April 24 at the north end of Lake Bomoseen. This is only the 2nd spring Coots have been reported in the 7 years of these "Records."

SHOREBIRDS

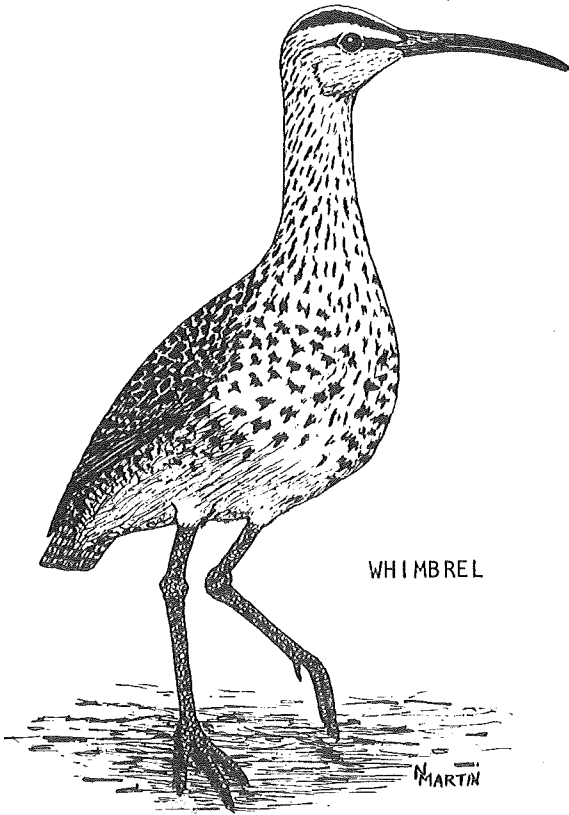
Not surprisingly, there were only 2 reports of Semipalmated Plover, both from Lake Memphremagog at Newport: 1 on May 21 (FO, WS, GFE, WGE) and 2 on May 29 (FO). Avant-garde Killdeer were back at Wallingford on March 10 (BLR), Cornwall on March 14 (AP), and Huntington on March 17 (BSE, ORE). By March 19 they were considered "abundant" near Charlotte in the Champlain Valley (JJA), though many areas reported first arrivals March 22 - 24, when flocks of 6-8 were seen in several areas. The seasonal high was 16 on a Woodstock flood plain on March 31 (JMN). An adult had 4 young by May 27 in south Vermont (RWP). Single BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS seen May 26 at White River Junction by George and Walter Elliott and May 31 at Prouty Beach on Lake Memphremagog by Frank Oatman and class were the first reported in spring since 1973. American Woodcocks were reported from Ripton on March 29 (JSA) and both East Barnard (JLB) and Craftsbury Common (DWB) on March 30, with many areas recording firsts through the first week of April. Numbers seemed average. By April 29 a bird was on a nest at West Woodstock and another had well fledged chicks near Shrewsbury (fide AFS), while fledglings were found as late as May 23 at Winhall (WJN). Single Common Snipe were first seen April 7 at Wallingford (BLR) and April 8 at Sand Bar Reserve (WS, CSz, RRo), though most areas recorded first movement April 15 on. The high was 23 on May 6 at Salisbury (WS); resident numbers seemed average. One of the best finds of the season was a WHIMBREL seen May 26 at Dead Creek by Alan Pistorius, Doug Kibbe and Annette Gosnell. Apparently grounded by a storm front passing that morning, this bird was only the 4th ever seen in Vermont. There were 8 reports of Upland Sandpiper, April 25 - May 23, all but 1 from the Champlain Valley. A bird was apparently on territory near the airport at Newport, where birds have been seen for several years (FO et al.). Good numbers of Spotted Sandpipers were seen, beginning with firsts April 25 at Winhall (WJN) and May 4 at Woodstock (EH) and Burlington (BSE, ORE). Resident populations seemed high, with 18-20 along a 3 mile stretch of the Barton River May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP) and "15+ any day in May at Dead Creek" (AP). A possible Solitary Sandpiper April 30 in the Shrewsbury area (fide AFS) opened the season, with the next on May 6 at Salisbury (WS), the maximum of 3-4 on May 23 along the Barton River near Newport (FO, CSz, CSP), and a final 1 on May 23 at Emerald Lake State Park (WJN). A WILLET, only the third ever seen in Vermont, was found at West Rutland Marsh on May 26, the same day the Whimbrel was discovered farther north; the Willet finders were Sally Laughlin, Henry Potter, and members of a VINS birding class. Greater Yellowlegs moved through the state April 15 to May 26 for a total of 11 reports and ca. 61 individuals, of which 40 at Salisbury on May 6 (WS) repre-

WOODPECKERS

A few Common Flickers overwintered and were seen in early March in the Champlain Valley, though birds March 8 at Mt. Holly (AEB) and March 31 at Craftsbury (FO, JW) were no doubt early migrants. Many areas reported first arrivals April 8 - 22, with highs of 6+ on April 21 at Clarendon (LHP), 7 on April 24 at Marlboro (WDN), and 10 on April 25 at Winhall (WJN). A pair were copulating by April 29 at Craftsbury (FO). Breeding populations of both Flicker and Pileated Woodpecker seemed stable. The female RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER which wintered near Stratton, the 2nd recorded in Vermont, was last seen April 21 (MMD). Only 3 reports of the scarce Red-headed Woodpecker were received: 1 on May 2 at Waterbury, a good record for the area (HBD); a pair May 15 - 19 at Weybridge (JID, MCD, AP); and 1 on May 28 at Woodstock, were unusual (HTB). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers appeared about on time with singles on April 14 in Marlboro (WDN) and Shrewsbury (fide AFS) and on April 18 at Stockbridge (EH). Numbers seemed good, with highs of 8 on April 24 at Marlboro (WDN) and 12 on April 25 at Winhall (WJN). Populations of Hairy Woodpecker and Downy Woodpecker seemed normal. A Hairy pair fledged young by May 29 at Marlboro (WDN). Two Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers were seen: 1 on March 3 at Goshen (WHC) was probably a winter wanderer, while the 1 on May 21 at Island Pond was part of a known breeding population (FO, WS, WGE, GFE). A NORTHERN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER found May 11 near Island Pond by Larry Metcalf could have been a late-lingering winter visitor; but it is possible this species will prove to be a very rare breeder in the state.

FLYCATCHERS

Two Eastern Kingbirds April 26 at Pittsford (BMZ) were the earliest reported, with many southerly areas listing firsts May 5 - 10. Henry Potter considered them common after May 9 at Clarendon, and many observers thought numbers were up. Great-crested Flycatcher seem to have arrived in a wave, with no less than 8 areas recording firsts May 7 (Bristol, AP) to May 10. This editor was surprised to find 15-18 along a 2½-3 mile stretch of the Barton River on May 23, a good number this far north (FO, CSz, CSP). An early Eastern Phoebe reached Vernon on March 15 (BBo), though the major influx occurred the last week of March, with reports then from as far north as Norwich and Thetford. Phoebes were nest-building by April 23 and sitting by April 28 at Woodstock (JMN). Numbers still seem down in the Northeast Kingdom, where a nest was nearly completed by May 8 (FO, DWB). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were seen May 18 at Winhall (1, WJN), May 21 at Island Pond (3-4, FO, WGE, GFE), May 23 at Wallingford (2, WGE), and May 26 at Shrewsbury (AFS et al.). Willow Flycatcher reports continue to increase, with a total of 14 seen this spring, the earliest on May 16 at Brattleboro (WDN). A high of 5 was logged on a trip across southern Vermont on May 26 (GFE, WGE), and a male was on territory May 21 onwards at Lake Memphremagog in the far north (FO). Again this spring there were fewer reports of Alder Flycatcher than of Willow, with a first on May 19 at Marlboro (WDN) and only 6 additional reports; the high was 6 over southern Vermont May 26 (WGE, GFE). The Least Flycatcher movement, which began with a report of 1 on May 7 at Bristol (AP), saw many areas listing firsts May 8 - 10 and a high of 10 in one small area in Greensboro on May 14 (FO). Numbers seemed stable. Eastern Pewees arrived earlier than ever before, with a remarkable first April 30 at Craftsbury (FO, JW). Even the next 2 reports - May 7 at Saxtons River (DC) and May 12 at Stockbridge (EH) - were earlier than any in the last 6 springs. Individuals reached Shrewsbury by May 14 (fide AFS), Marlboro by May 19 (WDN), and were considered common at Clarendon by May 19, about the time they normally first appear in Vermont! Numbers seemed average, with a high of 5-6 along the Barton River May 23 (FO et al.). Twelve Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported beginning with 1 on May 13 at Clarendon (LHP), though the next sightings were not until May 21. The seasonal high was 4 along 2½-3 miles of the Barton River on May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP).



WIMBREL

sented the seasonal high. Not surprisingly there was only one report of Lesser Yellowlegs; but the 20 seen May 6 at Salisbury (WS) represents a good concentration for spring. There were 6 reports of Least Sandpiper, May 16-31, for a total of 20 seen. A flock of 7 Short-billed Dowitcher migrating with a Black-bellied Plover at Newport's Prouty Beach on May 31 (FO et al.) were the only seen. The same location and date also produced the season's only Semipalmated Sandpiper (1 seen - FO et al.), curiously the first reported in spring since 1974. A WILSON'S PHALAROPE found May 20 at Dead Creek by Alan Pistorius and Wayne Scott was the 6th state record and only the 2nd ever in spring. A NORTHERN PHALAROPE May 26 at Springfield (seen by Eleanor Ellis, May and John Peavey and others) also established a 2nd spring record for Vermont.

GULLS AND TERNS

Wayne Scott and Wayne Bell reported an ICELAND GULL at Burlington's Intervale Dump on April 4, the 2nd report ever to the spring "Records." Eight Great Black-backed Gulls were reported, March 2 - April 14, about as usual. The high was 5 at the mouth of the Winooski March 10 (BSE, ORE), and all reports were from Lake Champlain except for the April 14 bird at Herrick's Cove (DPK, ALG, SBL). Herring Gull and Ring-billed Gull were poorly reported; I assume numbers were average. Ring-bill high counts were 150+ on March 24 at Charlotte (JJA) and a probable 4,000-5,000 present and at least half that number nesting by April 4 on the South Sisters Islands (JDS). Only 1 Bonaparte's Gull was reported - 1 near Bellows Falls on the Connecticut River on May 20 (DPK, ALG). Lake Champlain observers failed to submit reports on their Common Terns, but 1 stray found May 12 at Lake Memphremagog by Frank Oatman, Larry Metcalf and Jon Wood was the first there since the 1960's. Black Terns were also poorly reported (what's wrong Champlain observers?), with 3 seen May 8 at Dead Creek the seasonal first (WJN). Lake Memphremagog's colony (the only one away from Champlain) had 18-20 by May 12 and a nest under construction by May 23 (FO et al.).

DOVES THROUGH KINGFISHER

Rock Dove numbers seemed average; and Mourning Doves, which overwintered using feeders, began dispersing about mid-March; numbers were considered average to above average. An albino MD was seen April 28 at Jericho (BFG, GPG). Two parties found one Yellow-billed Cuckoo each on May 26 in southwestern Vermont (DPK, ALG and RWP), the only reports. There were but 10 reports of Black-billed Cuckoo, May 2 - 30, though Whit Nichols at Marlboro considered the species more common this spring than usual. Very few reports were submitted of either Great Horned Owl or Barred Owl, both resident species, and several observers considered Barred scarce this spring. The HAWK OWL already reported in the winter "Records" remained in its Westford haunts at least until March 22 when it was last seen by Michael Maurer. The major winter invasion of GREAT GRAY OWLS into New England produced a single spring record: a bird was found dead on the road in Peacham on April 1 and later brought to the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury (information from Bill Vinton of the museum). One Short-eared Owl was reported from East Montpelier on April 16 (BBC). Winhall had the only Saw-whet Owl, 1 heard calling March 29 - April 4 (WJN). Whip-poor-wills were poorly reported April 30 - May 21 from Fair Haven, North Pomfret, Rockingham, Marshfield, and Island Pond. The first Common Nighthawks were seen May 21 at Burlington (FO, WS, GFE, WGE) and at Bellows Falls (WDN, DPK, ALG, DC), after which they too were very poorly reported. Chimney Swifts reached Brattleboro by April 24 (2 seen, WDN), Rutland by April 28 (SBL), Middlebury by May 6 (3, WS), and Craftsbury by May 16 (1, FO and JW). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds reached Timmough by May 9 (GTL), Marshfield by May 12, and Craftsbury by May 15 (JW). Populations still seem low in the Northeast Kingdom (FO). Belted Kingfishers were reported in average numbers March 22 (Bethel, JHa) onwards, with many areas recording firsts April 13 - 28; the seasonal high was 6 on May 8 at Dead Creek (WJN).



GREAT GRAY OWL

LARK AND SWALLOWS

Flocks of 50-70 Horned Larks March 1 and 2 near Ferrisburg (AP, WGE) were the only reported except for 3 scattered sightings of 1-4 birds no doubt breeding. Early Tree Swallows reached Woodstock by March 23 (1, RKM), Timmouh by March 31 (1, GTL), and Rochester by April 2 (several, JKe), but many areas listed first arrivals April 11 - 13, by which date they were considered numerous at Lake Bomoseen (JRC). Craftsbury's first was not until April 19 (FO). Highs of 50 to 150 were recorded mid April to late May, and birds were nesting at Mt. Holly by April 24. Bank Swallows were poorly reported, but the first were 6 seen April 28 at West Rutland Marsh (LHP). There were "hundreds" at Dead Creek on May 5 (AP), though only 50 to 70 of the colony of 250+ had reached Newport by May 12 (FO, LNM). Rough-winged Swallows were infrequently seen April 30 onwards, though Eleanor Ellis considered numbers good near Springfield. Frank Oatman, Chris Schultz, and Craig Provost found 7 (the seasonal high) along the Barton River May 23, including a pair constructing a nest for the first breeding confirmation in the Northeast Kingdom. Four locations across the southern third of the state recorded first Barn Swallows April 23. Birds reached North Pomfret by April 24 (MCH), Timmouh by April 26 (GTL), and Cornwall by April 27 (AP). The major movement apparently occurred April 28 - May 12 with highs of 50-100. Birds were gathering mud at Greensboro on May 14 (FO). A Cliff Swallow April 26 at Timmouh (GTL) was the earliest, after which there were few reported. Don Clark had a bird sitting on a nest at Grafton by May 2, before most of us had seen firsts; birds at Greensboro Cliffs were still gathering mud on May 14 (FO). New colonies were reported from Rutland and North Clarendon. Purple Martins were reported only from the Champlain Valley (earliest May 5 at Dead Creek, AP) and from Newport, which has an isolated colony of ca. 6-8 birds (FO). The high count was 25 at Chimney Point on May 21 (DPK et al.).

CROW THROUGH CREEPER

Blue Jays were present in average numbers according to numerous observers. Jays were feeding young by May 15 at Grafton (DC), though a flock of 4 which passed over Craftsbury the following day were still in migration (FO). Common Ravens, reported from across the state were nowhere found in numbers greater than 3-4, and Oatman considered them slightly down in the Northeast Kingdom. Ravens were at a nest site in Grafton by March 24 (DC). Common Crows, everywhere reported in average numbers, began their seasonal increase in the Clarendon area by March 1 (LHP); the maximum was 100 seen March 23 at Craftsbury (FO). Black-capped Chickadee numbers remained good after a big winter for the species in Vermont, and Boreal Chickadee populations seemed in good shape in the Island Pond breeding area (e.g. 8-10 on May 21, FO et al.). Two Boreals May 8 at Middlebury, a good find there, were doubtless returning migrants (WS). This was the year of the Tufted Titmouse. After showing up in the winter in unprecedented numbers (see winter report), a total of ca. 18 birds were reported this spring from Shrewsbury, Stockbridge, Reading, North Ferrisburg, Mt. Holly, Springfield, and Plainfield. This is how Titmouse totals stack up for the springs of 1973, '74, '75, '76, '77, '78, and '79, respectively: 3, 1, 6, 2-3, 4-5, 1, and 18. Both White-breasted Nuthatch and Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers seemed average. Locations where White-breasts did not overwinter reported them back on breeding territories March 25 - April 3, and a pair were nest-building at Timmouh by April 23 (GTL). Brown Creepers overwinter in many areas, but migratory movement brought Creepers back to many areas March 13 - April 8; the seasonal high was 4 on March 25 at Marlboro (WDM).

WRENS

The first reported House Wren was April 28 at North Pomfret (MCH); individuals reached Cornwall by April 29 (AP), Andover by April 30 (EHP), Fair Haven by May 2 (FSA), and Timmouh by May 4 (GTL). Numbers seemed average, though 4-5 along a 2½-3 mile stretch of the Barton River on May 23 was good so far north (FO, CSz, CSP). First reports of Winter Wrens (singles unless noted) were: April 13 at Grafton (DC), April 21 at Stockbridge (2 seen, EH), April 22 at Mendon (5 seen, the seasonal high, NLM), April 23 at Marlboro (WDM), April 24 at Timmouh (GTL), and May 8 at Craftsbury (FO, DMB). Observers at Springfield and Marlboro considered populations low, though at Winhall Winters seemed to be making a recovery. The Long-billed Marsh Wren was reported from West Rutland Marsh (first May 8), Dead Creek (first May 12), and Lake Memphremagog (first May 21). The seasonal high was 4-5 at Lake Memphremagog on May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP), where numbers seemed down.

MIMICS

Twenty-six Mockingbirds were reported (and certainly more than that seen), so numbers of this recent colonizer of Vermont continue to look good. Mockers are regular as far north as Barre, but individuals May 8 at Craftsbury (FO) and May 7 at Derby Line right on the Canadian border, where they have nested in the past according to Percy Fellows, were surprising so far north. Gray Catbirds first appeared May 5 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS), May 6 at Fair Haven (FSA), May 7 at Saxtons River (DC) and Woodstock (CRP), and May 9 at Craftsbury (FO). They were considered common by May 19 at Clarendon (LHP), and I was feeding young by May 27 at Craftsbury (FO). Bill Horse thought Catbirds scarce at Winhall for the 2nd year. Brown Thrashers, whose numbers seemed average, first appeared April 21 at Castleton (VFBC), April 22 at Winhall (WJN), April 30 at Timmouh (GTL), May 3 at Woodstock (JMN), and May 8 at Craftsbury (FO).

THRUSHES

Though a few American Robins overwintered, first probable returning birds were 20 at Shoreham March 1 (AP), 1 at Clarendon March 14 (LHP), and 2 at Marlboro March 19 (WDM). Many areas reported a wave of first arrivals March 20 - 23, by which latter date they had reached as far as Craftsbury (FO). Maximum counts were flocks of ca. 300 on April 2 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS) and 200+ on April 14 at Herrick's Cove (DPK, ALG, SBL). Robins seemed especially plentiful to several observers. Birds were gathering nest material by April 26 at Mt. Holly (AEB), a nest was completed by May 9 at Craftsbury (FO), young were being fed by May 5 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS), and young were fledged by May 30 at Woodstock (JMN) and Clarendon (LHP). The first Wood Thrush was 1 on May 3 at Winhall (WJN), followed by first reports May 8 at Timmouh (GTL) and Middlebury (WS), May 9 at Woodstock (SBL) and Springfield (EE) and May 10 at Randolph (EWC). They were considered common in the Clarendon area by May 19 (LHP), and several thought breeding populations up in southern Vermont, though they seemed definitely down in the Northeast Kingdom (FO). A female had a brood patch by May 16 at the South Woodstock banding station (SBL). Initial Hermit Thrushes were reported about where expected, with firsts April 21 at Winhall (WJN) and April 22 at Grafton (DC) and Mendon (NLM). Everyone commenting agreed that numbers of Hermits still seem down. The Swainson's Thrush was reported from only 5 areas, May 21 - 31, with the firsts May 21 at Bellows Falls

(WDM et al.) and at Island Pond (FO et al.). There were only 4 reports of Gray-cheeked Thrush: 1 at Island Pond (FO et al.) and 5 at Bellows Falls (WDM et al.) on May 21 and individuals May 28 and May 30 at Winhall (WJN). Veerys were first seen May 8 at Winhall (WJN), May 9 at North Pomfret (MCH), May 10 at Tunbridge (EH), and May 12 at Newport (FO, LNM). Within 15 minutes on May 21 a team counted the following thrushes in migration overhead in fog and drizzle at Bellows Falls: 30-40 Veerys (the seasonal high), 2 Swainson's, and 5 Gray-cheeked (WDM, DPK, ALG, DC). Two Veery nests with eggs were found May 29 at the Babcock Nature Preserve in Hyde Park (FO et al.). Eastern Bluebirds reached Springfield by March 10 (fide EE), Clarendon by March 21 (1 seen, LHP), the Woodstock area by May 22 (MCH et al.), and Essex Center (fide BSE) and Plainfield (SW) by March 24. Approximately 55 birds were reported, arriving in the usual sporadic fashion, apparently as late as May 28. Bluebirds began incubating April 27 at Pittsford (BMZ), and a nest with 6 eggs was found May 26 in southern Vermont (RWP). Observers in Winhall, Cornwall and Springfield considered numbers still down.

GNATCATCHER AND KINGLETS

A record 19 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were reported, the earliest on April 21 at West Salsbury (2 seen, MCD, JID), with additional reports from Ferrisburg, Hubbardston, Dead Creek, Rockingham, and West Haven. Nests were located in Putney on May 16 (1 pair, MFZ, DME, TD, TW) and at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge on May 9 (2 pairs, MJH). A bird May 14 at Craftsbury was the second ever recorded for the Northeast Kingdom (FO). Golden-crowned Kinglets overwintered in some numbers, but area first reports in most cases represent returning birds: Shrewsbury on March 27 (fide AFS), Winhall on March 31 (3 seen, WJN), Mt. Holly on April 4 (AEB), and Moscow on April 21 (LNM). Highs were 12+ on April 21 at Grafton (DC) and 6 on May 3 at Craftsbury (FO, JW). Ruby-crowned Kinglet first reports were: 1 on April 21 at Marlboro (WDM), 1 on April 22 at Winhall (WJN), 2 on April 23 at Woodstock (JMN), 1 on April 27 at Timmouh (GTL), May 4 at Plainfield (MFM), and 2 on May 8 at Craftsbury (FO). Highs were 12+ on April 24 at Clarendon (LHP) and 6 on April 25 at Winhall (WJN), and migration continued until at least May 7 in the south. Two observers in eastern Vermont considered numbers still down.

PIPIP THROUGH STARLING

There was only 1 report of Water Pipit - 14 seen at Craftsbury on May 1 (LNM). Bruce Peterson had a flock of 38 or so Bohemian Waxwings on March 2 at Cornwall and by March 3 the flock had grown to 80. A flock of Cedar Waxwing which wintered near Charlotte still numbered 30-50 by March 5 (JJA). There were no reports thereafter until migrants began returning in late May. First arrivals reported May 26 at Woodstock (5 seen, JMN) and Springfield (5, EE), May 28 at Timmouh (2, GTL) and Clarendon (1, LHP), where birds were considered common by May 30. A pair were working on a nearly completed nest May 30 at Woodstock (JMN). Northern Shrikes lingered through March (4 birds reported, from North Pomfret, Wilder, Craftsbury, and Woodstock), with a final record April 18 at East Montpelier (MFM). There were no convincing reports of Loggerhead Shrike, for the second spring in a row. Though Starlings overwintered in many areas, observers reported first birds returning or numbers increasing February 26 - March 9.

VIREOS

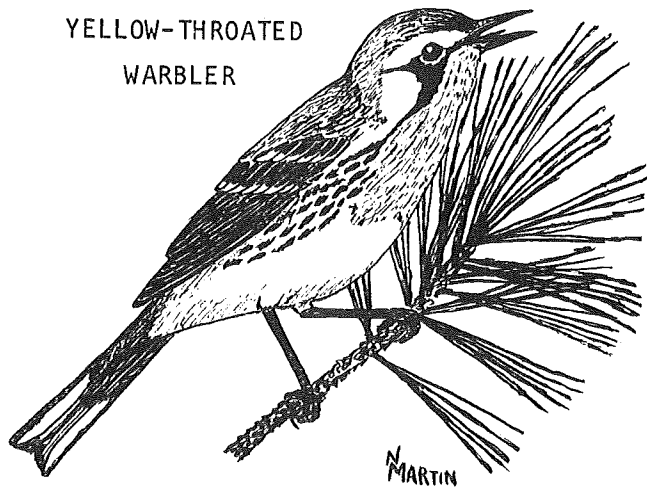
Yellow-throated Vireo reports are still on the increase, with nineteen this spring, a new record. Firsts (singles unless noted) were May 8 at Button Bay (WJN) and Clarendon (LHP), May 10 in the Woodstock area (4 total, MCH, EH), and May 11 at Middlebury (2 seen, WS). Highs were 3 on May 21 in the Bellows Falls-Saxtons River area (ALG et al.) and 2 along the lower Barton River on May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP), the latter a good record so far north. Solitary Vireos (singles unless noted) reached Marlboro (WDM) and Mendon (NLM) by April 22, Woodstock by April 23 (JMN), Green River Reservoir by May 1 (LNM), and Craftsbury by May 3 (2-3 seen, FO). Migration apparently peaked after April 24, with a high of 5 on April 25 at Winhall (WJN). A bird was sitting on a nest at Babcock Nature Preserve on May 30 (FO et al.). A Red-eyed Vireo seen April 22 at Grafton by Don Clark apparently represents the first April record ever. The next Red-eyed seen were singles May 9 at Winhall (WJN), May 11 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS) and Craftsbury (FO), and May 12 at Springfield (EE). Numbers seemed as good as usual. For the first spring in 6 years no Philadelphia Vireo was reported. Warbling Vireos (singles unless noted) reached Clarendon (LHP) and Dead Creek (WJN) on May 8, Woodstock (CRP) and Plainfield (MFM) on May 10, and Newport on May 12 (3 seen, FO, LNM). A count of 30-35 along a 2½-3 mile stretch of the lower Barton River on May 23 was considered good, and 1 of those was carrying nesting material (FO, CSz, CSP).

WOOD WARBLERS

The first Black-and-white Warbler appeared April 24 at Woodstock (SBL); singles were at Sharon (MCH) and Winhall (WJN) by April 25, Hubbardston by April 28 (LHP), Springfield by May 1 (EE), and Craftsbury by May 8 (FO, DMB). Highs were 10 on May 9 at Winhall (WJN) and 7 on May 18 at Vernon (WDM). A male WORM-EATING WARBLER seen and heard May 16 in Vernon by Whit Nichols was the first ever reported to these "Records." Ten Golden-winged Warblers were reported, as follows: 1 male on May 15 in Middlebury (BBP), 1 on May 22 and 2 on May 26 at Castleton (LHP, SBL), 5 males on May 31 at Ira (EE), plus "seen" on May 26 in southern Vermont without further details (RWP). A male Brewster's Warbler (hybrid between Golden-winged and Blue-winged) was seen May 16 at Middlebury by Wayne Scott and Alan Pistorius. Tennessee Warblers first appeared May 8 at Cornwall (AP), May 10 at Winhall (WJN), and May 12 at both Plainfield (MFM) and Craftsbury (FO), with final reports May 28 at Winhall (WJN) and May 29 at Craftsbury (FO). There were no notable concentrations. May 4 saw a Nashville Warbler at Clarendon (LHP); birds reached Winhall by May 6 (3 seen, WJN), Cornwall by May 7 (AP), and Craftsbury by May 8 (2, FO, DMB). Migration peaked May 10-11 in southern Vermont, and a count of 15-18 was made along a 2½-3 mile stretch of the Barton River May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP). Single Northern Parulas were at South Woodstock by May 3 (NLM, KAF), Winhall by May 7 (WJN), Middlebury by May 8 (WS), Plainfield by May 10 (MFM), and 2 at Newport by May 12 (FO, LNM). The Parula was considered scarce at Winhall. Yellow Warblers were first seen May 7 at Woodstock (CRP), May 8 at Dead Creek (10 seen, WJN), May 9 at Cambridge (PJK), and May 10 at Craftsbury (FO). Numbers seemed good - "common" at Clarendon by May 10 (LHP) and with 30-40 in the Newport area by May 12 (FO, LNM). Magnolia Warblers were back to Cornwall by May 7 (AP), Winhall by May 9 (WJN), and Craftsbury by May 9 (FO). The high was 15 on May 12 at Winhall (WJN). Cape May Warblers were apparently scarce this spring, the first on May 8 at Craftsbury (1 seen, FO) and the high of only 3 at the same location on May 16 and at Rockingham on May 21 (WDM et al.). Winhall's last migrant was May 28 (WJN). The Black-throated Blue Warbler showed up first at Stockbridge on May 5 (1 seen, EH); other area first arrivals were May 7 at Barnard (MLW) and Cornwall (AP), May 8 at Saxtons River (DC) and Plainfield (MFM), and May 12 at Newport (FO, LNM). The seasonal high was 10 on May 21 at Winhall (WJN). Yel-

low-rumped Warblers arriving about when expected, with firsts April 21 at Clarendon (1, LHP) and Winhall (2, WJN), April 23 at Shrewsbury (AFS) and Marlboro (WDN), April 24 at Burlington (BSE, ORE), April 25 at Springfield (6, EE), and April 29 at Craftsbury (1, JW). Migration seemed to peak May 5-14, with highs of "hundreds" May 5-8 at Cornwall (AP) and 60-65 on May 14 at Craftsbury (FO). About as expected were first Black-throated Green Warblers May 2 at Grafton (DC), May 4 at Stockbridge (EH), May 6 at Middlebury (WS) and May 8 at both Plainfield (HVE) and Craftsbury (FO, DWB). There were 4 at Middlebury by May 8 (WS), but most areas reported peak movement (highs of 4-6) May 12-21. Betty Gatewood located a singing male Cerulean Warbler May 12-15 at Bomoseen State Park - a good bird anytime in Vermont. Blackburnian Warblers first appeared at Stockbridge May 6 (EH), Cornwall May 7 (AP), and Craftsbury May 14 (4-5 seen, FO and JW). Blackburnians were considered "common" at Clarendon by May 19 (LHP). Bill Norse saw and heard a singing male YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER moving with a flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers on May 13 at Winhall; this represents only the 5th record for Vermont and the first since 1975.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER



About on time were first Chestnut-sided Warblers May 7 at Barnard (MLW), May 8 at Clarendon, Shrewsbury and Middlebury, and May 9 at North Pomfret, Tinnmouth and Craftsbury. Migration apparently peaked May 10-12 (highs of 3-10). Only 14 Bay-breasted Warblers were reported, May 11-31. Area firsts were May 11, 1 at Middlebury (WS); May 12, 4 at Shellhouse (AP); May 13, 3 at Clarendon (LHP); and May 14, 2 at Caspian Lake (FO, JW). A Blackpoll Warbler May 9 at Northfield (MCH) was the earliest in the 7 years of these "Records" and was doubtless urged on by the widespread warm weather of early May. The next reports were May 19 at Grafton (DC), May 21 at Island Pond (FO, WS, GFE, WGE), and May 22 at South Reading (WJN). Migration, which seemed poor (highs of 3) continued until at least May 30. Five reports of Pine Warbler were submitted: 1 on April 29 at Half Moon State Park (JRC), 1 on April 25 at Winhall (WJN), 1 number May 12 in Addison County (AP et al.), a pair gathering nesting material May 12 at Newport (FO, LNM) and at the same spot also May 21 (FO et al.), and 1 on May 26 in southern Vermont (WGE, GFE). More Prairie Warblers were reported than ever before: May 18, singles at Vernon (WDN) and Wallingford (DHD); May 21, 2-3 near Saxtons River (DPK, ALG, DC, WDI); May 26, 2 in southern Vermont (WGE, GFE, DPK, ALG); plus a report without details of birds at a regular nesting area near Springfield (EE). Five Palm Warblers were reported (singles unless noted): April 22 at Craftsbury (JW), April 25 at the Huntington Nature Center (BDF, BRO), May 2 at Winhall (WJN), and May 6 (1) and May 8 (2) at Middlebury (WS). First Ovenbirds were reported May 6 from Grafton (DC), Winhall (1, WJN), and Springfield (3, EE). Birds reached Shrewsbury by May 7 (fide AFS), Woodstock by May 8 (SBL), and Newport by May 12 (FO, LNH). Ovenbirds seemed common at Clarendon by May 12 (WJN), and breeding populations seemed normal. A banded male was in breeding condition on May 31 at South Woodstock (fide SBL), A Northern Waterthrush May 1 at Craftsbury (LNM) was the earliest; individuals were recorded at Tinnmouth by May 4 (LHP), at North Pomfret by May 9 (MCH), and in Addison County by May 12 (AP). The highs were 6-8 at Newport on May 12 (FO, LNM) and (of breeding birds in large part) 30-40 along 2½-3 miles of the lower Barton River on May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP). Seventeen Louisiana Waterthrushes were reported, far more than ever before; this may be largely due to better coverage, however, rather than to increasing Louisiana populations. The first reports (singles) were April 30 at Tinnmouth (GTL), May 2 at Grafton (DC) and South Pomfret (HBD, LNM, MCH), May 4 at Winhall (WJN), and May 7 at Bristol (AP). George and Walter Ellison tallied an impressive 9 (6 in Norwich, 1 in Ludlow, 1 on Mt. Ascutney, 1 in Shrewsbury) on May 26. All Louisiana reports were from the southern half of the state except for a bird carrying food at Babcock Nature Preserve in Hyde Park on May 29, the 2nd consecutive year for this northern-most breeding location in Vermont (FO et al.). Only 6 Mourning Warblers were actually reported, the earliest May 13 at Marshfield Pond (1, MFM) and May 14 at Caspian Lake (2, FO). However, Whit Nichols mentioned "many more reports this spring into June" from the Brattleboro area. Common Yellowthroats apparently arrived in a wave, with firsts May 7 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS), May 8 at Tinnmouth, Clarendon, and Dead Creek, May 9 at Woodstock, and May 11 at Craftsbury. Birds seemed as abundant everywhere as usual. Wilson's Warbler reports were down to 5 this year, seen May 12 (first at Plainfield, MFM) to May 26 from locations scattered over the state. A Canada Warbler May 1 at Winhall (WJN) was the earliest (by 6 days) ever reported to these "Records." Other area firsts came much later, e.g. May 12 at Stockbridge (EH), May 14 at Craftsbury (FO), and May 18 at Vernon (WDN). Numbers looked average. An American Redstart May 4 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS) tied the previous early record, and most area firsts were about 3-5 days ahead of average arrival. Redstarts reached Cornwall by May 7 (AP); Clarendon, Middlebury and Chelsea by May 8; Woodstock, Tinnmouth and Craftsbury by May 9. There were no notable migratory concentrations, but breeding populations looked good. A bird was on a nest in Ferrisburg by May 27 (JID, HCD).

HOUSE SPARROW, ICTERIDS AND TANAGERS

House Sparrow numbers seemed average in most areas but perhaps a bit down in the Northeast Kingdom (FO). The first Bobolinks reached Mt. Holly (AEB) and Middlebury (MN) by May 4. Many areas recorded first arrivals May 7-9, by which latter date they had reached Craftsbury (FO). Several observers considered Bobolink numbers up, though Eleanor Ellis thought them not as plentiful in the Springfield area as during the very good 1978 season. In contrast, numbers of Eastern Meadowlark seemed down. As usual, a few birds were found in March: 1 on March 16 at Jefferson (FO, JW), March 22 at Marshfield (LNM), and 3-4 on March 24 at Cornwall (AP). Other areas listed firsts April 3-12, with a high count of 25 on May 8 at Dead Creek (WJN). Though a few Red-winged Blackbirds probably overwintered, migration began early in March, as demonstrated by the following first arrivals: March 1 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS), 1 on March 4 at North Pomfret (MCH), 1 on March 6 at South Burlington (fide BSE), 1 on March 7 at Clarendon (LHP), and 2 on March 9 at Plainfield (MFM). As usual buildup was fast, with "at least 50" at Mt. Holly by March 5 (AEB), ca. 160 at Cornwall by March 8 (AP), 400+ at South Hero by March 10 (BSE, ORE), and 250 at Craftsbury by March 23 (FO). An immature male Orchard Oriole was seen April 27 at Cornwall by Alan and Dotty Pistorius for the only report of the season. The Northern Oriole arrived about when expected, with firsts May 1 at Clarendon (LHP), May 3 at South Pomfret and Mt. Holly, May 4 in Shrewsbury, May 6 in Wallingford, May 7 in Middlebury, and May 8 in Plainfield and Craftsbury, at which latter location a female was already gathering nesting materials that date (FO). The species was considered common at Clarendon by May 10 (LHP), and both Metcalf in Plainfield and Oatman in the Northeast Kingdom thought Northern Orioles especially abundant this year. A 2½ mile section of the Barton River produced a tally of 30-40 on May 23 (FO, CSz, CSP). Rusty Blackbirds were well reported with 21 sightings, March 14 (Mt. Holly, AEB) onwards, though Craftsbury's first did not come until March 23 (FO). Migration continued at least until April 22. A pair of Rustys were feeding young at Winhall by May 28 (WJN), but the previously good breeding populations in the Island Pond area were definitely way down (FO). The first Common Grackle reports were March 2 at Grafton (DC), March 5 at Cornwall (1, AP), March 6 at Woodstock (CRP), and March 15 at Plainfield (MFM), though careful observers at Brattleboro and Clarendon did not see firsts until March 21-22. The seasonal high was 1,000+ on March 31 at Clarendon (LHP), and Grackles had a nest by May 23 near Newport (FO) and eggs by May 26 in southern Vermont (RWP). At least a few Brown-headed Cowbirds overwintered, such as 1 at Mt. Holly which remained until March 3 (AEB). Typical first arrivals were March 6 at South Woodstock (INS), 1 on March 9 at Plainfield (MFM), and 1 on March 15 at Waterbury (HBD). Numbers seemed average. The Scarlet Tanager arrived about on cue, with firsts (both singles) May 8 at Clarendon (LHP) and Middlebury (WS). Individuals reached Stockbridge (EH) and Tinnmouth (GTL) by May 9, Woodstock by May 10 (JHN), Springfield by May 12 (EE), and Craftsbury by May 16 (FO, JW). Numbers seemed normal, and nests were found May 26 (with eggs) in south Vermont (RWP) and May 30 at Babcock Nature Preserve (FO et al.).

FINCHES

Numbers of Cardinal continue to look good (see winter report). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks first appeared at Shrewsbury on May 4 (fide AFS), Clarendon on May 5 (1, LHP), Springfield on May 7 (1, EE), and both Woodstock (SBL) and Craftsbury (1, FO, DWB) on May 8. The high was 12-13 on May 14 at Greensboro and Craftsbury (FO, JW), and several observers considered numbers up. The late-arriving Indigo Bunting was reported only 6 times, May 11 - 27. The firsts were May 11 at Herrick's Cove (WJN) and May 12 at Tinnmouth (GTL). One thinks of Evening Grosbeaks primarily as winter birds in Vermont, but many areas reported good-sized flocks (50-100) remaining into March and April after a good Grosbeak winter. Latest area reports range from April 15 to May 25, though Evenings breed locally in Vermont. Leucistic (very pale) Evening Grosbeaks were reported March 17 at Mt. Holly (AEB) and April 5 at West Woodstock (BBr). Purple Finches were at many feeders in February and March as previously reported; other areas reported first arrivals from mid-March through mid-April, with a high of 100+ on April 22 at Winhall (WJN). Thirty House Finches were reported from 13 locations, up from last spring's 20, seen from 9 locations. Northernmost locations were Jericho in the west, Randolph in the center, and Norwich in the east. After a winter invasion, Pine Grosbeaks remained into mid-March in many areas, with latest reports March 23 at Marlboro (1, WDI) and May 4 at Clarendon (6+, LHP). As during the winter, there were only scattered reports of Pine Siskin, for a total of 8. The maximum count was 40 March 3-18 at Plainfield (MFM). At Wallingford 3 Siskins ceased visiting a feeder on May 8th (BLR). American Goldfinches seem to have dispersed quietly from the large flocks reported in winter, returning to several northern areas where they did not winter April 24-April 30. Rufous-sided Towhees were first reported April 25 at Burlington (1, BSE, ORE), April 26 at Tinnmouth (3, GTL) and Shrewsbury (fide AFS), and April 29 at Woodstock (EHME). Towhees were considered common at Clarendon by May 12 (LHP). The Savannah Sparrow was poorly reported; the first was March 25 at Woodstock (JHN), followed by 2 on April 21 at North Pomfret (EH) and 1 on May 3 at Rutland (WJN). The seasonal high was only 10 on May 8 at Dead Creek (WJN). Bill Norse reported the only Grasshopper Sparrows, singles May 8 at Bridport and Middlebury. A pitiful 5 reports of Vesper Sparrow were submitted: 1 on April 24 and 3 on April 26 at Cornwall and "several" at Dead Creek (AP); 1 on May 8 at Middlebury Airport (WJN); 1 somewhere in south Vermont May 26 (WGE, GFE); and 1 on May 27 at Springfield where Vespers were considered down (EE). Though a few Dark-eyed Juncos were around in January and February, many areas reported firsts March 22 - 28. Highs were 25-30 at Mt. Holly March 30 (AEB), 100 at Winhall April 6 (WJN), 150+ at Tinnmouth on April 14 (GTL), and large flocks were still at Grafton on April 24 (DC). Nesting had begun by May 12 at Lincoln (fide JID). An OREGON JUNCO form was seen April 28 at Winhall by Bill Norse. After a poor winter, Tree Sparrows were reported only 10 times in March and April, the latest April 23 at Cornwall (AP) and April 24 at Woodstock (JHN). There were 2 May reports - May 10 and May 19 at Shrewsbury (fide AFS). Chipping Sparrows reached Herrick's Cove (1, WJN) and Middlebury (1, AP) by April 23; Pittsford, Shrewsbury and Tinnmouth by April 25. Thereafter small numbers (high 8-10 on May 8 at Craftsbury, FO) were seen, and a pair were nest-building by May 17 at Saxtons River (DC). Fifteen Field Sparrows were reported, and observers at Winhall, Clarendon and Brattleboro considered breeding populations down there. First arrivals were: April 8 at Middlebury, Winhall, and Woodstock, with scattered sightings thereafter. Thirty White-crowned Sparrows were reported, April 24 - May 16, with highs of 4 on April 25 at Randolph (EWC) and 5 on May 8 at Middlebury (WS). Several active observers failed to see White-crowns in areas where they normally do. A few White-throated Sparrows overwintered, but migration was certainly underway by April 12 when 4 were seen at Woodstock (JHN); Wallingford had 2-3 on April 15 (BLR); but most areas reported firsts April 22-24, by which time birds were numerous at Grafton (DC). There were no notable concentrations.

Twenty-nine Fox Sparrows were reported, with area firsts March 23 at Marlboro (1, WDN), March 24 at Stockbridge, Winhall and Woodstock; March 27 at Tinnmouth; and March 28 at Waterbury. Several locales had highs of 3, and birds were gone by April 30 (1 at Jericho, BFG, GPG). The Lincoln's Sparrow was reported only 3 times: April 24, 2 at the Barre Reservoir (LNM); May 11, 1 at South Woodstock (fide SBL); and May 21, 3-4 at Island Pond (FO, WS, GFE, WGE). Swamp Sparrows first appeared April 22 at Shrewsbury (AFS), April 23 at West Rutland Marsh (4, LHP), April 24 at Marlboro (1, WDN), and April 26 at Winhall (1, WJN). The high count was 8 on May 8 at Dead Creek (WJN). Song Sparrows were first located at Cornwall March 8 (AP), Shrewsbury March 20 (fide AFS), Barnard March 22 (MLW), Marlboro March 22 (WDN), Waterbury March 23 (HBD), and Craftsbury March 26 (FO, JW). Migrant high counts were 16 on March 23 at Marlboro (WDN) and 12+ on March 31 at Clarendon (LHP). Populations seemed good, and birds were nest-building by May 3 at Woodstock (JMN) and had eggs by May 23 at Craftsbury (FO, JW). The Snow Bunting was reported twice - a few at Bridport on March 1 (AP) and ca. 70 at Manchester on March 3 (DWS).

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VERMONT DAILY FIELD CARD

DATE	LOCALITY
OBSERVERS	
TOTAL SPECIES	

NOTE: Median arrival and departure dates are indicated by numbers for the months, and by A, B, C, D, for the weeks of each month.

EXAMPLE: Goose, Snow 3D-5A 10B-11D means that Snow Geese are present from the last week in March (10B) until the first week in May (5A) and again in the autumn from the second week in October (10B) through the last week in November (11D).

* = scattered reports throughout the year

† = rare and local breeder

bold face = breeding bird

P, R. = Permanent resident or present throughout the year

GAVIIFORMES	Loon, Common 4B-1C *†	Blue-winged 4A-10C
	Red-throated 10D-12C	Wilson, American 3C-4D 9A-11A
PODICIPEDIFORMES		Sheveller, Northern 4A-5A 9C-10B †
	Golden Red-necked 4C-5A 10B-11C	Duck, Wood 3D-12C
	Horned 4B-5B 10C-1A	Redhead 11D-12C
	Red-billed 3D-11D	Duck, Ring-necked 3B-5B 10A-12C †
PELICANIFORMES		Canvasback 3C-4D 10A-12D
	Common, Double-cr. 4D-10C	Scaup, Greater 3C-4D 10A-1D
		Lesser 3D-4D 10A-12B
CICONIIFORMES		Goldeneye, Common P, R.
	Heron, Great Blue 3D-10B *	Goosander 3C-4D 10C-12D
	Green 4C-9D	Oriole, Yellow 10C-12D
	Egret, Cattle 4D-11A †	Scoter, White-winged 10A-12D
	Great 5A-5C	Surf 4C-5B 8D-12B
	Snowy 8B-9A	Black 4C-5C 10A-12C
	Heron, Black-cr. Night 4B-9D	Duck, Ruddy 4B-5C 11A-12A
	Bittern, Least 5C-8D †	Merganser, Hooded 3C-12C
	American 4C-10A	Common P, R.
ANSERIFORMES		Red-breasted 4A-5A 10A-12D
	Goose, Canada 3A-12C	FALCONIFORMES
	Brant 4B-5A 10B-12C	Vulture, Turkey 3C-10D
	Goose, Snow 3D-5A 10B-11D	Goshawk P, R.
	P, R.	Hawk, Sharp-shinned 4A-10D *
	Duck, Black P, R.	Coope's 4B-10C *†
	Gadwall 4C-5C 8D-10D	Red-tailed P, R.
	Pintail 3D-5B 9B-12A †	Red shouldered 3B-11A
	Teal, Green-winged 3D-4D 8D-12A †	Broad-winged 4C-10A

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