SUMMER SEASON 1980

WAYNE SCOTT, SEASON EDITOR

Perhaps Summer 1980 can best be summarized as the season of contrasts and counterpoints. Take, for instance, the species total - 191. This is the highest ever in June and July. In spite of this impressive total, there seemed to be a diminution of effort after the initial exuberance of the 1976 through 1979 Atlas seasons. Perhaps this was the calm before the storm of activity to complete the project in 1981. It was a superb year for non-passerines, especially waders, waterfowl and shorebirds. Fourteen species were reported previously in summer no more than three times. HORNSRED GREBE, GREAT EGRET and BUFFLEHEAD make their first summer appearances, and first Atlas confirmations were obtained for GADWALK and SHORT-EARED OWL. SNOWY EGRET, BRANT, LESSER SCAUP, STILT SANDPIPER and SEMIPALMATED PLOVER have been reported to these "Records" only once before, while PEREGRINE FALCON and PECTORAL SANDPIPER occur for the third time.

In contrast to the numbers of non-passerine vagrants, was a dearth of unusual passersines. In fact, though, the outstanding bird of the season falls into the latter category. A VARIED THRUSH, present almost daily throughout the previous winter and spring, was unprecedented in summer in Vermont and possibly anywhere east of the Mississippi.

Undoubtedly, the weather was a significant factor in the appearance of so many water birds. Lack of appreciable amounts of precipitation through the previous winter combined with relatively dry conditions in Vermont, at least into July, contributed to low lake levels. Furthermore, similar, if not more severely dry conditions in some mid-Atlantic states, created ideal shoreline habitat for post-breeding vagrant waders from the south.

This report features a radical departure from the format of reports before it. Actually the format is borrowed from the Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts. It is a compromise between the style utilized in the 1975 "Records" which listed merely the submitted records without comment, and the species by species narrative analysis which has dominated recent "Records."

A word or two about how to interpret this report:
for each group of species (the groupings are not necessarily taxonomic though they follow prescribed sequence) there is an analysis summarizing the salient observations of trends where discernible. In the interest of brevity, I have chosen not to mention some of the omnipresent species. Reports of these and all other species in a group are listed, following the analysis. I have exercised editorial license on those records which might have some significance. Included were early or late dates, seasonally large or small numbers, nearly all data which specified numbers of individuals and the date the observation was made, and sightings made in unusual locations. In addition, I have appended for each appropriate species an Atlas summary. If the location of an Atlas record was unusual or significant, I have made note of that location. For species which are less common, I have included all reports. Except for a few species, I have avoided analyzing distribution patterns revealed by Atlas data, leaving that for a later issue when all the data are compiled.

A final word: we, the seasonal editors, blithely go about the business of presenting the data in a format of our own choosing. I, for one, would appreciate reader feedback with regard to your preferred format.

Loons Through Bitterns

Pairs of Loons were seen at 5 of the usual northeastern Vermont locations including Barre Reservoir. In the southern part of the state, Vermont apparently failed at Gala Meadows and Lowell Lake. An all-plumaged HAINES" bird was photographed on an Almena Lake lakeside during the late afternoon of 6/22. The sighting was the first of this species in four summers. Great Black-backed Gull, first reported from Vermont in 1976, appeared near South Hero and at Kent Pond were probably non-breeding adults. This distribution suggests that discovery of breeding on islands in Lake Champlain may be too far in the future. Following the pattern revealed by Atlas work, Green Heron was first been found in all regions of the state except in the Northeast Highlands. There were 6 active nests of Cattle Egret on Young Island. Inordinately dry conditions in southern New England and the Middle Atlantic states no doubt contributed to the strong showing of Leucistic and SNOWY EGRETS. Previously unrecorded in the summer "Records", GREAT EGRETS occurred to the east of the major value observed this season. First record on the Connecticut River is an unprecedented number for Vermont in any season.

SPARROWHAWK has been nearly as rare during June and July, having been reported once before in the "Records." The bird reported from South Hero, Marshes of Hampden, was not totally unexpected, represents a first record there. Possible nestings of Black-crowned Night Heron near Hyde Park Island is likely the second Atlas record away from the Champlain Valley and meeting of least Bittern at West Rutland Marsh is only the second confirmation for this species in summer.

Common Loon: 6/3, Marshfield Pond, 2 (PMII); 6/19, Mistletoe Lake, 2;
6/19, Mount Lebanon Reservoir, 1 (MCD); 6/23, Middlebury, 3 (JMCP),
2 adults, 1 juvenile; Lowell Lake, 2 (HCD). Common Loon, male
was reported from Grand Isle, South Hero; and at Kent Pond were
probably non-breeding adults. This distribution suggests that
there may be a breeding colony on islands in Lake Champlain.

BRANT: 6/23, Four Brothers, 1 (JMCP);
6/26, South Hero, 2 (WJN). BRANT has been a consistent feature
of the summer "Records" in recent summers. A male was first
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WAVERLY: A heavily streaked immature PEREGRINE FALCON highlights the list of summer sightings. This raptor indicated the reality of nesting in the Champlain Valley this summer and the third occurrence in as many years. Attempts to reintroduce Peregrines as a nester continue here and in other eastern states. But for now must be content with very occasional passages. The first summer BALD EAGLES sighted in the Champlain Valley since 1976 included onadults post-breeding in early August and had an immature in active primary flight (JLS) near Peru. Turkey Vultures were seen in the vicinity of oat and cornfields but not as frequently as in years past. The widely reported, as usual, the hosts this year came from the Champlain and Connecticut River valleys. This is an interesting fact that reflects the greater interest of people in the state in birds that nest despite being a common sight. A new report of breeding in the Champlain Valley, the only one in Vermont, a Ring-necked Pheasant was reported from South Slang and was confirmed by R. Rutland Marsh, Rutland (MCO, et al.). This species has declined in the eastern half of the state over the last 10-15 years. Norse reports that the number of accipiter reports this season was average. Observations that the number of reports of Accipiter this season was average. Observations that this summer diurnal raptors was evident for a species uncommon even in its more conventional haunts in the Champlain Valley. During this summer sightings of Marsh Hawk were limited to the Champlain Valley and the South Bay Marshes. Sighting of an adult on July 1 has been accepted as confirmation of historical nesting; this season, probable nesting was obtained at an undisclosed location. The presence of two mid-summer vagrants in the Champlain Valley this summer were a BROADCASTING HAWK and a RING-NECKED PHEASANT.


DOVES THROUGH KINGFISHER

An albino Mourning Dove in Norwich was interesting and certainly genetically unusual. Of the IT Atlas reports for Yellow-billed Cuckoos, all but one were submitted from the western fringes of the state. They were especially common at South Slang where the Dyes counted at least 5 different territories. Black-billed Cuckoos were found in all regions except Essex County. Both cuckoo populations are obviously large; consequently its occurrence from year to year in a given location can be unpredictable. Without question, the highlight of the Atlas season 1980 was confirmation of nesting for SHORT-EARED OWL (location confidential by request). Brian Farrell first discovered an adult foraging in a field; when he investigated strange calls from nearby woods he found 2 recently fledged young. This is the first report of breeding for this species in Vermont and is about average. Bonaparte’s Gull: 7/13, Shelburne Bay, 1 (BOF). Black-billed Gull: 6/14-15, Yellow (3); 6/15, Shelburne Bay, 1 (BOF). American Kestrel: Atlas Summary - total 30, 10 confirmations. Cooper’s Hawk: Georgia reports were down only slightly from 1979. 7/26, Oead Creek, 1 (BOF). American Kestrel: 6/25, Weatherfield, 12 (DHA); 7/26, Dead Creek, 11 (HUM, WBJ); Ferrisburg, max. 6 (MCO, J10); Atlas summary - total 11, all possible. Goose Hawk: Atlas summary - total 9, 1 confirmation (Wexler River, HR). Sheldrake Pond Hawk: 7/6, Timber, 1 (JOL); 7/26, Stratton Mt. 1, 4 (HR); Atlas summary - total 5, all possible. Coopers Hawk: Georgia Plain Quad, confirmed (HR, et al.). Saxtor River, possible (HR), Dead-tailed Hawk: Atlas summary - total 36, 6 confirmations. Red-shafted Finch: 7/25, Westford, 2 young FL (HUM, et al.); Atlas summary - total 13, 2 confirmations. Broad-winged Hawk: 6/22, Westford, 1 young FL (HUM); Atlas summary - total 27, 1 confirmation (Zander, HOS). BALD EAGLE: 6/10, Hud Creek, Albany, 1 adult (HUM, WBJ); 7/26, Dead Creek, 1 (HUM, WBJ); Hud Creek, 1 (BOF); Hud Creek, 1 confirmed (DMC, HOS); Hud Creek, 1 (HR); Hud Creek, 1 (BOF); Hud Creek, 1 confirmed (RN, DM). PEREGRINE FALCON: 7/27, Sand Bar Ref., 1 (HUM, WBJ). American Kestrel: Atlas Summary - total 30, 10 confirmations.

SHORT-EARED OWL

Without doubt, one of the most exciting finds of the summer was a female SPACE DOVE female with 7 or 8 young on a Goose Bog on two consecutive days in early July. The number of records of this species is extremely rare in the years at the rarity of this species in the state, and the fact that virtually all sightings of this species are recorded only in the Champlain Valley. More extensive inland records are needed here and in adjacent areas. This summer, observations have come from the dimishing boreal habitat and adjacent to Moose Bog. owl, underscoring the absolute necessity of preserving intact upland habitat. Also from Goose Bog comes a report of a Common Gallinule which was observed in the sedge marshy vegetation, this providing the first record for Vermont for a species uncommon even in its more conventional haunts in the Champlain Valley. Rare birds were observed in numerous locations statewide. Nearly anywhere in Vermont, a Ring-necked Pheasant was listed as a probable nester in Emmick Falls. But for now can only content with very occasional sightings. Of the 5 regularly nesting shorebirds at South Slang, 3 confirmed. 7/31, Shelburne Bay, 1 (BOF). Simulated Sandpiper: 7/11, Orange (BOF); 7/12, Shelburne Bay, 1 (BOF). Pectoral Sandpiper: 7/25, Shelburne Bay, 1 (BOF). Unconfirmed Sandpiper: 7/25, Shelburne Bay, 1 (BOF), South Slang, 1 confirmed.

WOODPECKERS THROUGH HUNTER LANK

One of the more surprising reports of this group as being mostly unce-

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confirmed. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 6/17, Winhall, max. 2 (WJN); 7/9, Woodstock, 1 banded (MFH); Atlas summary - total 92, 17 confirmed. Wood Thrasher: 6/27, Winhall, max. 1 (WJN); June/July, Woodstock, 6+ pairs (JNM); Atlas summary - total 35, 13 confirmed. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: 7/1, Woodstock, 1 (JMN); June/July, Woodstock, 3 pairs (JMN); Atlas summary - total 35, 13 confirmed.

确认。黄蓑本科: 6/17, 温哈, 最大 2 (WJN); 7/9, 伍德斯托克, 1 美国 (MFH); 亚特兰大总 - 总 92, 17 确认。伍德俄勒冈霍克: 6/17, 温哈, 最大 2 (WJN); 7/9, 伍德斯托克, 1 美国 (MFH); 亚特兰大总 - 总 92, 17 确认。木鹳: 6/27, 温哈, 最大 1 (WJN); 6/17, 伍德斯托克, 6+ 群体 (JNM); 亚特兰大总 - 总 35, 13 确认。短尾扫把: 7/1, 伍德斯托克, 1 (JMN); 6/17, 伍德斯托克, 3 对 (JMN); 亚特兰大总 - 总 35, 13 确认。
BAY-BREASTED WARBLER

Yellow-throated Vireo: 6/6, V. Rutland Marsh, 1 (WJN); 6/22, S. Lang, "numbering" (PFZ); 7/1, Horset, 1 (WJN); Atlas summary - total 18, 2 confirmed. Solitary Vireo: 6/1-7, 9 males, not seen after 6/7 (WJN); June/July, Harshfield Pond, 1 banded (HFM); June/July, Winhall, 8-10 per day (WJN); Atlas summary - total 63, 14 confirmed. Red-eyed Vireo: June/July, South Strafford, 3 males (NH); June/July, Harshfield Pond, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Woodstock, 5+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 1-5 pairs (IIJN); Atlas summary - total 55, 33 confirmed. Philadelphia Vireo: 6/12, Winhall, 1 pair (coushihio) (NH); June/July, Winhall, 2 banded (ALG et al.); Haldstone Lake, possible (WJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Warbling Vireo: June/July, 3 banded (HFM); June/July, HarriCk's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harrick's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harris et Pass, 1 banded (HFM); June/July, Northern Waterthrush, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Shimmer, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 6-10 per day (IIJN); Towle Lake, 1 banded (JWJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Black and White Warbler: June/July, Woodstock, 3 banded (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 8-10 per day (WJN); Atlas summary - total 50, 14 confirmed. Golden-winged Warbler: 6/11, Ogunquit, Maine (WJN); June/July, Marshfield Pond, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Woodstock, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 10-15 per day (IIJN); Atlas summary - total 55, 33 confirmed. Philadelphia Vireo: 6/12, Winhall, 1 pair (courchihio) (NH); June/July, Winhall, 2 banded (ALG et al.); Haldstone Lake, possible (WJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Warbling Vireo: June/July, 3 banded (HFM); June/July, HarriCk's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harrick's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harris et Pass, 1 banded (HFM); June/July, Northern Waterthrush, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Shimmer, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 6-10 per day (IIJN); Towle Lake, 1 banded (JWJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Black and White Warbler: June/July, Woodstock, 3 banded (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 8-10 per day (WJN); Atlas summary - total 50, 14 confirmed. Golden-winged Warbler: 6/11, Ogunquit, Maine (WJN); June/July, Marshfield Pond, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Woodstock, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 10-15 per day (IIJN); Atlas summary - total 55, 33 confirmed. Philadelphia Vireo: 6/12, Winhall, 1 pair (courchihio) (NH); June/July, Winhall, 2 banded (ALG et al.); Haldstone Lake, possible (WJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Warbling Vireo: June/July, 3 banded (HFM); June/July, HarriCk's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harrick's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harris et Pass, 1 banded (HFM); June/July, Northern Waterthrush, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Shimmer, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 6-10 per day (IIJN); Towle Lake, 1 banded (JWJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Black and White Warbler: June/July, Woodstock, 3 banded (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 8-10 per day (WJN); Atlas summary - total 50, 14 confirmed. Golden-winged Warbler: 6/11, Ogunquit, Maine (WJN); June/July, Marshfield Pond, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Woodstock, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 10-15 per day (IIJN); Atlas summary - total 55, 33 confirmed. Philadelphia Vireo: 6/12, Winhall, 1 pair (courchihio) (NH); June/July, Winhall, 2 banded (ALG et al.); Haldstone Lake, possible (WJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Warbling Vireo: June/July, 3 banded (HFM); June/July, HarriCk's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harrick's Cove, 1+ pair (WJN); June/July, Harris et Pass, 1 banded (HFM); June/July, Northern Waterthrush, 2 banded (HFM); June/July, Shimmer, 9+ pairs (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 6-10 per day (IIJN); Towle Lake, 1 banded (JWJN); Bear Mountain, possible (WJN, NHM). Black and White Warbler: June/July, Woodstock, 3 banded (JMN); June/July, Winhall, 8-10 per day (WJN); Atlas summary - total 50, 14 confirmed.
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