SUMMER SEASON 1982

1 JUNE - 31 JULY
WAYNE SCOTT, SEASONAL EDITOR

I suppose this report could be characterised as a summary of the "summer after." After five (really six) years of Atlasing, birders around the state breathed a collective sigh of relief with a predictable decline in the number of reports which crossed this desk. That is not to say there weren't some outstanding birds this season. Unquestionably, the YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD which visited a feeder in Barre in June was the outstanding bird. Then there was a first state breeding for DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT and two modern records for ORCHARD ORIOLE.

And, this was the summer for the long-awaited drawdown of Dead Creek. Birders by the dozen flocked there to witness a shorebird migration which lived up to most expectations. An added bonus was the appearance of two CASPIAN TERNs, a first for this species in Vermont since 1976.

Weathewise, June was cooler and wetter than normal throughout most of Vermont. Most stations reported temperatures averaging from 2.4 to 5.3 degrees F. below normal while precipitation was from 1.36 to 5.84 inches above normal. Heaviest rainfalls occurred in extreme southern Vermont on the 6th while northern sections received moderately heavy amounts between the 23rd and 30th. July was more summer-like with temperatures just slightly below normal on average and precipitation from 0.01 to 2.79 inches below average.

Examining the pattern of occurrence of the shorebirds at Dead Creek in light of weather conditions during July, one can construct a possible scenario to explain the data. The earliest southward migrants (for which I have data) appeared about the 15th following two days of NW winds. There followed several days of winds from the south. A shift back to the north on the 20th coincided with the peak of the southward movement and numbers began to build to the 25th when winds briefly switched out of the south. The highest numbers of migrants occurred during the period from the 23rd to the 25th. By the 27th winds had again come out of the northwest and in advance of bad weather which brought the heaviest rains of the month on the 28th, there was a sharp reduction in the number of migrants. The data for the period 27-31 July reflect lower numbers for most species.

Earlier than usual migrants were observed along the Massachusetts coast prompting regional editor, Tingley, to speculate that there had been a poor nesting season in the north (Am. Birds 36(6):954). This perhaps explains in part the extraordinarily early appearances of the Dunlin (earliest record for this species) in Vermont since 1976. Stilt and White-rumped Sandpipers may be more common than the paucity of reports would indicate, I have listed all sightings in the summary. Especially uncommon species have been both underlined and capitalized. Noteworthy totals or locations have also been underlined.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL: A careful survey of Common Loon nesting pairs in the state yielded figures which closely matched those for 1981. There were 24 territorial pairs of which 19 attempted to nest. Twelve pairs were successful producing 14 chicks (LNM, VINS). In spite of all the coverage Dead Creek received, no Pied-billed Grebes were found and the paucity of reports statewide underscores the decline in Vermont and elsewhere as reported by Kibbe in American Birds (36:6). By contrast, Double-crested Cormorants are becoming downright common near islands in Lake Champlain. This species was not even reported in the summer records for 1977 and 1978 and only sparsely in other summers. Only 2 Cattle Egrets were found attending nests on Young Island, down from 6 pairs two years ago. The three reports of vagrant Great Egrets from Dead Creek probably represent only two individuals. A Least Bittern at Fairfax Falls was unusual. Not uncharacteristically, late migrating flocks of Canada Geese were seen. Three pairs of American Wigeon, a summer rarity in Vermont, were found in South Hero. Common Mergansers usually found along the White River presumably were overlooked there while 8-10 were spotted around the Four Brothers Islands.


For more uncommon species, or those which may be more common than the paucity of reports would indicate, I have listed all sightings in the summary. Especially uncommon species have been both underlined and capitalized. Noteworthy totals or locations have also been underlined.
with adult, Young Island (SBH,WH); 7/16 112+ Young Island (BYL); Great Blue Heron: J/J 2 ad. 4 imm. Morrisville (JP); 6/7 5-10 Missisquoi National Wild­life Refuge (hereafter MMWR) (WS et al.); 6/26 24 East Bay, Poulney River (MCO); 7/1 2 nests, 3-4 juv. Ripton (JSA, RMA); 7/30 62 Dead Creek (hereafter DOCM); 7/21 4 Lake Sunapee (LNM); Green Heron: 6/3 Herrick's Cove (hereafter HC) (JUN); 7/3 6 Lake Hortonia (WBB); 7/29 2 HC (WIN); plus 10 sightings from the Champlain Valley var. obs. Cattle Egret: 6/3 2 (nest) Young Island (DEC); Great Egret: 6/26 1 DOCM (WBB); J/J 27/29 1, 1 DOCM (JSA, RMA); 7/30 1 DOCM (LAM, WS); Black-crowned Night Heron: 6/7 3 ad., 2 imm. DOCM (WS et al.); 6/17 2 Shellburne Pond (SJ, JID); 6/24 1 Burlington (SBL, JID); 7/28 1 imm. New Haven River (KD); 7/30 11 DOCM (WS,WGE). Least Bitter­nutter: 6/3, 22 1 W. Rutland Marsh (hereafter WRM) (WJN); 6/24 1 South Slag (NCD, JID); 7/14 1 Fairfax Farm (FMH). American Bittern: 6/26 5 South Slag (MCD, JID); 7/30 3 DOCM (JAM); also single birds seen at: SBH, Woodbury Mt., WRM, and MMWR. var. obs. Canada Goose: 6/7 50+ (5 broods, max. 12 juv.) DOCM (WS et al.); 6/11 60 Reading (RPM); 6/11 31 Green River Res. (WS et al.); 6/14 27 Shoreham (EDM); 6/22 10+ (nesting failed) Gale Meadows (NWN); 7/17 1 pr., 6 juvenile Goshawks (WJN); 7/23 12 DOCM (MCD, JID); Mallard: 6/3 1 WRM (WIN); 6/9 2 SBM (WS et al.); 6/29 600+ DOCM (WHB); 6/29 20+ HC (WIN); 7/13 13 MMWR (EBL); Black Duck: 6/2 1 Woodstock (JMM); 7/29 15+ DOCM (JSA, RMA); max. of 10 at MMWR (EBL); Blue-winged Teal: 6/5 3 MMWR (WS et al.); 6/9 8 SBM (WS et al.); 7/15 1 KMA; American Wigeon: 6/15 2, 3 f., 5 juv. MMWR (WS et al.); 6/27 3 pr. South Hero (SBH, WS et al.); Wood Duck: 6/3 1 Lake Hortonia (WGE); 6/5 1, 5 juv. MMWR (WS et al.); 7/13 14 max. DOCM (JSA, RMA); total of 21 Weybridge (MNB); Common Goldeneye: 6/5 7 MMWR (WS et al.); Hooded Merganser: 6/3 1 T. Lake Hortonia (WGE); 6/4 1 Bobcock Preserve, Eden sites (WS et al.); 6/19 1 f. Marshfield (MUM); 7/28 1 f. Lemon Fair River, Shoreham (JSA, RMA); J/3 numbers down South Slag (MCD, JID); Common Merganser: 6/8-10 Four Brothers Is. (JSA, RMA).

VULTURES AND HAWKS: Reports of 6 Goshawks, all from the central, mountainous region of the state, and of 2 Cooper's Hawks were about average. But a total of 4 Sharp-shinned Hawks represents a decline from 1981, perhaps as a result of a reduced summer coverage by birders. Sightings of Red-tailed Hawks were concentrated in the Champlain Valley and for the fourth year an albino­nistic individual was seen in Hinesburg. Sightings of both Red­shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks were limited to the Green Mountains. An adult Bald Eagle at Missisquoi WW was uncommon though not unusual, as most of the previous records were here in the islands. Two very rare game species Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasant, neither of which does very well here in the state. The total of 4 reported only once previously in July, (7/27/78), so the early date for this species as well. For STILT SANDPIPER the drawdown at Dead Creek, the first since 1974, attracted 19 species of "shorebirds" and numerous shorebird enthusiasts during July. Among the highlights were first mid-summer, records of WILLET, DUNLIN, WILSON'S PHALAROPE, and NORTHERN PHALAROPE. For Dunlin which can be found sometimes in good numbers in September, this summer's sighting represents the earliest by nearly a month. WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER has been reported only once previously in July, (7/27/78), so the sighting at Herrick's Cove on July 15 establishes a new early date for this species as well. For SEMIPALMATED PLOVER which is always rare in Vermont, this was the third record for summer. Among the more common breeding species, there were some extraordinary (for Vermont) numbers: Killdeer (114), Lesser Yellowlegs (185), Least Sandpiper (156), Short-billed Dowitcher (88), and Semipalmated Sandpiper (275).

PLOVERS THROUGH PHALAROPES: The drawdown at Dead Creek, the first since 1974, attracted 19 species of "shorebirds" and numerous shorebird enthusiasts during July. Among the highlights were first mid-summer, records of WILLET, DUNLIN, WILSON'S PHALAROPE, and NORTHERN PHALAROPE. For Dunlin which can be found sometimes in good numbers in September, this summer's sighting represents the earliest by nearly a month. WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER has been reported only once previously in July, (7/27/78), so the sighting at Herrick's Cove on July 15 establishes a new early date for this species as well. For SEMIPALMATED PLOVER which is always rare in Vermont, this was the third record for summer. Among the more common breeding species, there were some extraordinary (for Vermont) numbers: Killdeer (114), Lesser Yellowlegs (185), Least Sandpiper (156), Short-billed Dowitcher (88), and Semipalmated Sandpiper (275).

Four Brothers Is. (JSA, RMA).
central, mountainous section, and as far as Missisquoi NWR in the Champlain Valley. The less common Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found only in three localities all in the western fringe from the southern Champlain Valley southward. BARN OWLS with two young were present in New Haven thus constituting only the second nesting reported to the Records. The only Screech Owl was seen in Groton State Forest, an unexpected locality for this species. There was but a single report of Whip-poor-will. One observer saw perhaps as many as 21 Belted Kingfishers along the Poultey River. If true, this would be a single-day high for the Records.

**Mourning Dove:** 6/8 30 (max.count) Shoreham (ELW); Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 6/18 1 Tinmouth (GTL); 6/22 1 Ira (ELW); reg. 2-3 Bridport (JSA, KMA); Black-billed Cuckoo: 6/1 4 Ripton (MCD, JID); 6/2-7/24 16 birds in 11 localities statewide (var. obs.); BARN OWL: 7/12, 24 2 ad., 2 imm. New Haven (JSA et al.; Scrееch Owl: 7/25, 24 2 ad., 2 imm. Poultney River; 7/31 1 Shoreham (ELW); J/J 1 Weybridge (JSA, KMA); J/J 1 Albany (TP); Barred Owl: 6/3, 7/25 1 Winhall (WJN); 6/18 1 Reading (MEC); 6/17 1 Groton State Forest (JJA); 6/17-7/31 max. 3 Marshfield (WJN); 6/27, 7/22 1/2 Missisquoi (WS et al.); 7/15 1 Sapsucker: 6/24 6 South Slang (MCD, JID); 7/15 1 Piscataqua River (MEC); Common Nighthawk: 6/12 3 Rutland (CJF); 6/16 2 S. Burlington (MCD, JID); 1/1 Woodcock (WS, KMA); mid-July 1 Burlington (JSA, KMA); Chimney Swift: 6/1 10+ Northfield (WJN); J/J 10-15 Woodstock (JSA); July 30+ Middlebury (JSA, KMA); Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 6/1 2 Ferdinand (WS et al.); 7/10 6+ (3 m., 1 fl.) N. Ferrisburg (MCD, JID); J/J 5 Barnard (JMP); J-J "savage" Winhall (WJN); 7/31 4 Shoreham (ELW); Belted Kingfisher: 7/13 4 Dead Creek (MCD, JID); 7/22 max. 21 Poultey River (WJN).

**WOODPECKERS AND FLYCATCHERS:** Two melanistic Common Flickers in Norwich were a curiosity. The presence of one was unusual; two represents a statistical oddity. Of note were two sightings of the Red-headed Woodpecker, rare in Vermont, along Otter Creek in Weybridge; the only place in the state where this species can be found more or less regularly each summer. There were no reports of either three-toed Woodpecker. Norrie found Eastern Phoebe numbers to be "very poor" in Winhall but two observers in the Champlain Valley found them "very common" and "common", Kibbe (Am. Birds 36:6) reported a region-wide decline in numbers this year perhaps as a result of spring snow storms. A Willow Flycatcher in Northfield was unusual for that part of the state.

**Common Flicker:** 6/15, 30 1,2 melanistic Norwich (MEC, KMA); 6/26 6 South Slang (MCD, JID); 7/14 fl. Brownsville (JEA, MCD); 7/17 3 fl. N. Westminster (MCD); 7/14 6 Reading (MCD); 7/31 15 (imm.) Woodstock (JMN); Pileated Woodpecker: 6/4 3 Duxbury (MEC); 7/14 fl. Winhall (WJN); 15 additional sightings statewide to as far north as Albany. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER: J/J seen twice Weybridge (Fide JSA). Yellow-billed Sapucker: 6/11 5-7 Green River Reservoir (WS et al.); 6/24 12 (4 nests) Reading (MEC); 11 additional sightings statewide. Hairy Woodpecker: 6/23 fl. Woodstock (JMN); 7/17 7 Reading (MEC). Downy Woodpecker: 6/20 fl. Woodstock (JMN); 7/14 2-3 fl N. Westminster (MCD); 7/24 12 Reading (MEC). Eastern Kingbird: 6/7 15 DOWMA (WS et al.); 6/17 10 fl. Chester (WJN); 6/14 3 fl. Woodstock (JMN); 7/31 19 Shoreham (ELW). Great Crested Flycatcher: 6/5 6 Missisquoi (WS et al.); 6/22 6 (2 ad., 4 Juv.) Shoreham (ELW). Eastern Phoebe: 6/26 3 Duxbury (MEC); 7/10 3 Shoreham (ELW); very poor Winhall (WJN); very common Weybridge-Bridport (JSA); common Shoreham (ELW). Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 6/20, 21 Winhall (WJN); 6/1 2 Brunswick, Ferdinand (WS et al.); 6/10 2 Jay Peak (WS et al.); 7/18 1 Lake Brook (WJN); 1 banded Marshfield Pond (MEC). Willow Flycatcher: 6/3 1 WRM (WJN); 6/7, 9 2 DOWMA (WS et al., ELW); 6/21 1 Northfield (WJN); 4 additional sightings in 4 localities.
Alder Flycatcher: 6/3 4 WRM (WJN); 7 additional sightings in 6 localities. Least Flycatcher: 6/4 max. 15 m. Bobbrock Preserve (BSM et al.); 6/5 max. 10 m. MMWR (WS et al.); 6/11 max. 10 m. Green River Res. (WS et al.) 6/21 3 fl. Woodstock (JNM); 10 banded Marshfield (MEM). Eastern Wood Pewee: 6/4 5 Bobbrock Preserve (WS et al.); 6/5 6 MMWR (WS et al.); 6/22 3 Northfield (WBB); 6/24 4 South Slag (MCD, JID); 7/10 Yellow Warbler (JSA, KMA); 7/25 Tufted Titmouse (FMH). Loggerhead Shrike: 6/11 Reading, Ripton (FMH, MCD, JID); 7/25 1 Winhall (WJN); 6/2-7/28 10+ in 6 localities, all northern Vermont.

HORNED LARK THROUGH BLUE CREEPER: Horned Lark made an exclusive appearance in Addison County this summer. The only two Gray Jays reported were, not surprisingly, found in Ferdinand in the Northeast Kingdom. Common Ravens were widely reported including 8 on Camels Hump, July 6. Three Boreal Chickadees in Ferdinand was perhaps a bit low. There were single Tufted Titmouse in Starkboro and Reading and 3 fledged in W. Westminster. Thirteen Red-breasted Nuthatches in Reading was very good, overshadowing other sightings in the northern half of the state.


Common Raven: 6/1 1 Ripton (MCD, JID); 6/5 5 Ferdinand (WS et al.); 7/6 8 Camel's Hump (JSA, KMA). J/J 6 Walden (JAM); 12 additional sightings in 7 localities in Green Mts. Common Crow: daily 10 Albany (PM); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 6/6 2 (1low?) Duxbury (FAP); 7/17 48 Reading (FMH); BOREAL CHICKADEE: 6/8 3 Ferdinand (WS et al.); TUFTED TITMOUSE: 6/26 1 S. Starksboro (WBB); 7/17 1 Reading (FMH); 7/19 3 fl. Winhall (WJN). Ruffed Grouse: 6/28, 29 E. Dorset (WJN); 6/30 4 Lye Brook (WJN). Downy Woodpecker: 6/8 2 Ferdinand (WS et al.). Red-breasted Nuthatch: 6/26 2 Duxbury (FAP); (ONLY reports! Numbers down?)

WRENs THROUGH SHRIKE: Curiously there were more reports of Long-billed Marsh Wren than House Wrens. Often with species which are quite common such as the House Wren, the number of reports is inversely proportional to the actual population. A total of 7 Mockingbirds was about average with all but one of the sightings from the western fringe of the state. A Gray Catbird banded in S. Londonderry July 31, 1977 was recovered in Woodstock on June 15. There were 9 reports of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher including one at 10 birds at Middlebury and one of a single bird at Winhall, the only locality away from the Champlain Valley. The single report of Golden-crowned Kinglet represents a reduction from Atlas years, undoubtedly due to less intensive coverage in suitable habitat. The LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE continues to be difficult to find in Vermont; the only bird was found at Dead Creek, the only place left in the state where one has a reasonable chance of finding it.

House Wren: 6/1 1 Northfield (WBB); 8 additional reports (max. of 2 birds) in 6 localities. Winter
(FHM); 6/10 5-10 Jay Peak (WS et al.); 6/26 5 Duxbury (FAP). Yellow-rumped Warbler: 6/8 5-10 Ferdinand (WS et al.); 6/10 max. 10 Jay Peak (WS et al.); 7/24 6 Reading (FHM). Black-throated Green Warbler: 6/1 3 Ripton (MCD,JID); 7 additional sightings in 5 locations. CeRulEAn Warbler: 6/18 2 Sand Bar (MCD,JID). Blackburnian Warbler: 6/1 13 Reading (FHM); 6/8 5-10 Ferdinand (WS et al.); 6/26 5 Duxbury (FAP). Chestnut-sided Warbler: 6/1,7 6,6 Reading (FHM); 6/1 8 Ripton (MCD,JID); 6/17 1 Woodstock (JMN); 6/26 6 "low" Duxbury (FAP); 7/31 5 Reading (FHM); 3/3 10/day Winhall (WJN). Blackpoll Warbler: 6/10 5 Jay Peak (WS et al.) Only report! Mourning Warbler: 6/1 6 Reading (FHM); 6/17/7 1 1 Winhall (WJN); 6/1 Babcock Preserve (WS et al.); 6/8 3 Ferdinand (WS et al.); 6/11 4 Green River Res. (WS et al.); 6/26 7 Duxbury (FAP); 6/27 1 Hartford (GFE). Common Yellow-throat: 6/4 10 Babcock Preserve (WS et al.); 6/5 10+ MMWR (WS et al.); commonly and widely reported elsewhere. Louisiana Waterthrush: 6/3 2 Ramoseen (WGE); 6/4 1 Babcock Preserve (WS et al.). Northern Waterthrush: 6/1 1 Ripton (MCD,JID); 6/4 5 Babcock Preserve (WS et al.); 6/15 1 S. Londoonderry (WJN); 6/18 1 Sand Bar (MCD,JID); J/J 1 Reading (FHM); 8 banded Marshfield (MEM). Ovenbird: 6/1 31 Reading (FHM); commonly reported elsewhere. Pine Warbler: 6/3 1 Ramoseen (WGE); 6/26 1 S. Burlington (ELW); 6/27 1 Hartford (GFE); 7/7,25,26 3 Albany (TP). Canada Warbler: 6/4 2,5 Woodstock, Babcock (JMN,WS et al.); 6/8 3 Ferdinand (WS et al.); 6/10 1 Jay Peak (WS et al.); 6/11 3 Green River Res. (WS et al.); 7/17 10 Reading (FHM); J/J 3/day Winhall (WJN). American Redstart: 6/1 16 Reading (FHM); 6/10 10 HC (WJN); 6/5 15 MMWR (WS et al.); 6/11 10+ Green River Res. (WS et al.).

BOBOLINK THROUGH SCARLET TANAGER: What will go down as the best bird of the season has to be an adult YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD which apparently was photographed at a feeder in Barre in June. This would be most remarkable for the time of year; a vagrant such as this might occur rarely in spring or fall, but to occur in summer is extraordinary in the least. Two nesting ORCHARD ORIOLES were found, one on an island on Lake Champlain (2nd year male & mate) and one at the D.A.R. Mansion at Chimney Point. This is the first known nesting since 1977 and only the second and third on record.

Bobolink: 7/7 12 W. Londonderry (WJN); commonly and widely reported. YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: June 1 ad. m. Barre (fide FAP). Red-winged Blackbird: 6/30 50 WRCM (WJN); 7/30 500 Shoreham (ELW). Eastern Meadowlark: 6/17 6,7 1,5 COWA (WS et al.); surprisingly few reports! ORCHARD ORIOLE: 6/27 1 pr. (2nd yr. m.) with nest Lake Champlain Island (SBL,JDL,WH); adult feeding young, Addison, 6/26 (AJS); Northern Oriole: 6/6 8 Shoreham (ELW); 6/18 fl. Woodstock (JMN); 6/24 20 South Mcd (JCD,JID). Rusty Blackbird: 6/14,27 4,9 Marshfield (WJN); 7/1 1 Ripton (JSA,KMA); 7/2 2 MMR (EMH). *This is the highest number for this species ever reported to the summer Records. Common Grackle: 7/20 75 Albany (TP). Brown-headed Cowbird: 7/3 10/day max. Winhall (WJN). Scarlet Tanager: 6/4 1 (orange variant) Ferrisburg (MCD,JID); 6/18 2 fl. Woodstock (JMN); 7/18 12 Lye Brook (WJN).
Contributors are reminded to send in rare and unusual bird sightings at once (or to call the Vermont Bird Alert) and to submit seasonal summaries promptly at the end of each season. This publication is only as complete as you make it. If you need sighting cards, write VINS, Woodstock, VT 05091, or call us at 457-2779.

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