

VERMONT INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE  
**Records of Vermont Birds**

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## FALL MIGRATION 1987

1 August - 30 November

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There is no single phenomenon or series of avian events which attract one's attention in the Records of Vermont Birds of Fall 1987. It is tempting to dismiss such a season as average but this would ignore some out-of-the-ordinary happenings which appear isolated against the varied avian tapestry. The total bird species reported during autumn 1987 was 238, which is above average for all seasons since 1975 but at par for the last five falls.

August was rather cool and dry, although the highest temperature of 1987 at Burlington was recorded on the 17th. The only noteworthy migration detected in August occurred during the last week when a stationary front settled over Vermont.

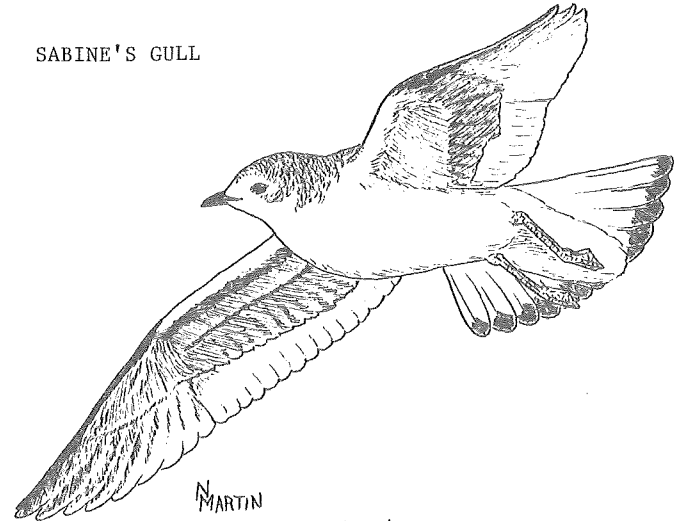
September and October were Vermont's wettest since 1981. Over a dozen fronts passed over the state during these months. A major hawk flight was noted on 9/15 after a cold front passed 9/12 to 14. A stationary front developed and remained over Vermont 9/18 to 22. During this five day period excellent numbers of migratory birds were recorded including Northern Flickers, Broad-winged Hawks, and several warbler species.

The most memorable weather event of autumn 1987 was the extraordinarily heavy early October snowstorm of the 4th. Up to 18 inches fell on the Green Mountain State on 10/4. The cold front, which arrived on 10/3, grounded a number of migrants including some rare and scarce species such as Vermont's first SABINE'S GULLS, jaegers, RED PHALAROPE, Red-throated Loon, and Ruddy Duck. Considerable habitat damage took place in the aftermath of the storm as many large trees lost their limbs to heavy snow. Good numbers of birds were seen after the passage of a cold front on 10/7, especially Ruby-crowned Kinglets. A stationary front became established on 10/10 and remained until 10/12 producing a good Canada Goose flight 10/11-12, and a hawk flight in its wake on the 12th. Good numbers of geese were also reported on 10/16. A cold front on 10/20 cleared out on the 21st leaving migrants in its wake on 10/22. On 10/24, with the unsettled weather following this front, an excellent Snow Goose flight was noted. Another cold front arrived on 10/25 and weather remained wet through the end of October. A good waterbird fallout developed over this period with jaegers on 10/26, and excellent numbers of Oldsquaw, Common Loons, and Bufflehead on 11/1.

November was relatively dry with highly variable temperatures. Snow fell on about five days but only southern Vermont and the Northeast Highlands received above average amounts. The only noteworthy avian fallout after 11/1 was on 11/15 when high counts of Canada Geese, Red-necked Grebes, and Black Scoters were reported. These all followed a stalled front from the 10th to the 12th which left up to 12 inches of snow in southern Vermont.

Another wet autumn meant low numbers of waders (shorebirds) in Vermont for the third straight year,

SABINE'S GULL



after photo by Dick Lavalée

although the 27 species reported covered a full diversity of species including Hudsonian Godwit, Whimbrel, and the previously cited phalarope. Boat coverage of Lake Champlain produced large numbers of Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Little and Bonaparte's Gulls and the jaegers and Sabine's Gulls noted above. Boreal invaders in good numbers included Pine Siskins and Snowy Owls. The latter was reported in extraordinary numbers, ten times the average for previous falls. White-winged Crossbills were present early in the season in the northeast but it was not clear if they were breeding or post-nesting visitors. Other northern species were less evident: there were only single reports of Bohemian Waxwing, Common Redpoll, and Pine Grosbeak, and just three reports of Northern Shrike. Goshawks and Rough-legged Hawks were also not in overwhelming numbers. Analysis of numbers of warblers since 1982 indicate no clear trend. This is also true when one removes those species that winter in the United States. Numbers reported in autumn 1987 were about average for the last six years. "Spotted" thrushes remained in low numbers with the significant exception of the Hermit Thrush, the only one that winters in the United States.

The best of a handful of rarities were the Sabine's Gulls of 10/3-5 on Lake Champlain. A Northern Oriole of the western Bullock's race was also a first for Vermont. Other rarities not mentioned above included a Barrow's Goldeneye in Vernon, three late Yellow-breasted Chats, and a Dickcissel in Shoreham.

### LOONS THROUGH HERONS

There were two reports of Red-throated Loons, one each from the Connecticut and Champlain Valleys, 2 were observed on L. Champlain in Addison on 10/3 (RBL, DKL), and 1 was at Vernon on 11/9 (JJC). An impressive total of nearly 720 Common Loons was reported, high counts included 122 at Grand Isle on 9/27 (RBL), and 361 on L. Champlain on 11/1 with 284 in Georgia and St. Albans (RBL, PAT). On a more disheartening note, a loon found shot in Poultney on 11/7 subse-

quently died at VINS on 11/9 (SM). Just over 70 Pied-billed Grebes were reported with a max. of 11 at Herrick's Cove (hereafter HC) on 9/24 (AMD), six were reported into November with the last at Shelburne on 11/8 (WAM). Nearly 500 Horned Grebes were reported with most of these on L. Champlain, the earliest were 12 at Panton on 10/5 (RBL,PAT), the high count was 141 on 11/27 in Addison and Ferrisburg (Button Bay) (WGE, NLM), the only report away from L. Champlain was of a single individual at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro on 10/26 (JJC). The earliest of 28 Red-necked Grebes were 2 on 10/11 at Panton (WGE,NLM,RBL), the best count was 6 on 11/15 on L. Bomoseen (SSW), others at interesting locations included lone birds at Leicester Jct. on 10/23 (SSW), and at Berlin Pk. on 11/28 (ATA). The recent radical change in the abundance of the Double-crested Cormorant was never more obvious than this autumn; nearly 1200 were reported with a max. of 690 on northern L. Champlain on 8/12 (WGE,NLM,RBL). Reports of cormorants away from L. Champlain included sightings from HC, Vernon, Quechee, Wilder, Brattleboro, Townshend, Thurman W. Dix Reservoir (hereafter TWDR), Winhall, L. Memphremagog, Island Pk., Orleans, Randolph, and Northfield. Ten American Bitterns were reported, none later than 9/17; the high count was 4 at South Bay, Newport on 8/9 (PFW,SAW). The two Least Bittern reports were 1 on the Little Otter Creek in Ferrisburg on 8/2 (SGP), and 2 at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area (hereafter DCWMA) on 8/8 (AMD). Over 200 Great Blue Herons were reported throughout the season, high counts were 25 on 9/2 at East Creek, Orwell (ELW), and 58 at DCWMA on 9/4 (JID,MCD). Seven Great Egrets included 1 at Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro on 8/6 (DUW, fide JJC), this bird was apparently present to 8/25 (AGK), 1 in Essex Jct. on 8/5 (RBL), 1 observed at Cambridge Jct. on 8/13 (LH), 1 at Benson on 9/2 (ELW), 1 at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, Swanton (hereafter MNWR) on no specified date (JBG), and 2 rather late birds at Vernon on 10/3 (NLM, JJC, et al.). The only reports of Snowy Egret were from the lone Vermont breeding site, Young I., Grand Isle with 3 present on 8/12 (WGE,NLM,RBL), and the latest observation on 9/4 (RBL). Up to 13 Cattle Egrets were counted at Young I. and birds were present there until 8/30 (RBL,DJH, et al.), late season reports of dispersing egrets included 1 at Stockbridge on 10/24 (EH), and 1 in Dummerston and Vernon from 10/28-11/3 (DMe,AGK,PM, fide JJC). Just over 50 Green-backed Herons were reported including a high count of 6 on 8/13 at Mud Creek, Alburg (WGE,NLM), and a late date of 1 on 10/8 at View Pk., Woodstock (JMN). Three dozen Black-crowned Night-Herons were noted, the high count was 16 on 8/12 at Young I. (RBL,WGE,NLM), up to 7 were reported at DCWMA, and the latest was at Burlington on 10/12 (JDM).

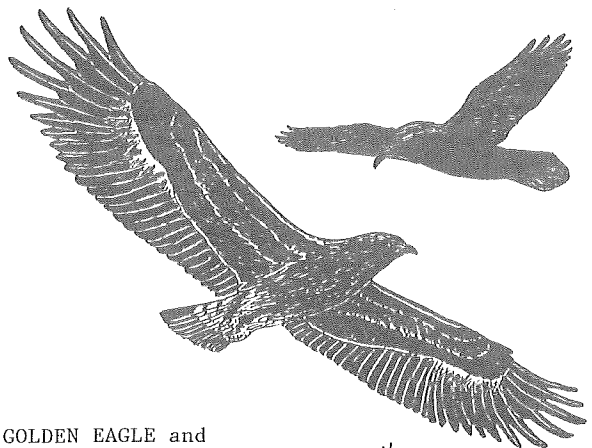
WATERFOWL

Reports from MNWR and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD) aerial waterfowl survey are cited prior to reports by birders in waterfowl accounts. Two thousand of 2038 Snow Geese were at DCWMA on the 11/19 aerial survey (BCr,VFWD). Over 9500 others were reported, the earliest were 200 on 10/4 at Burlington (WAM), peak flight dates included 10/16 with counts of 460+ at Bragdon Nature Preserve (hereafter BNP), Woodstock (NLM), and 800 in Timmouth and Danby (CJF), and 10/24 with flocks of 200 at Montpelier and 225 at Dorset, the highest count submitted was an impressive 6000 from DCWMA on 10/24 (MBN). About 5 "blue" snow geese were reported. There were two reports of Brant including 46 in two flocks in Panton and Ferrisburg on 10/11 (WGE,NLM,RBL), and 30 at HC on 10/22 (WJN). The aerial survey of 11/19 produced 7380 Canada Geese with 3000 at DCWMA (BCr, VFWD), about 14,900 others were reported, the earliest definite migrants were observed at Lincoln Hill (MPB),

and Mt. Philo (JID,MCD) on 9/17. The best migration dates were 10/11-12 with 1470 reported, 10/16 with 1960 noted, and 11/15 with 900 observed at Vernon (JJC). A "Richardson's" Canada Goose (one of the small arctic races) was seen at HC on 11/25 (WJN). Downy Wood Ducks were observed at MNWR on 8/14 (JBG), the peak month at MNWR was September with a high count of 1000 on 9/20 (JEG), waterfowl survey results included 283 on 9/28 with 110 at MNWR and 15 on 11/19 at St. Albans Bay (BCr,SW,VFWD). Over 430 others were reported with high counts of 75 on 9/14 at Clarendon (CJF), and 50+ at Brattleboro on 10/22 (DUW, fide JJC). The best month for Green-winged Teal at MNWR was October with a max. of 800 on 10/21 (JBG), 741 were seen on the aerial survey of 9/28 including 320 at Mud Creek, Alburg and 201 at East Creek, Orwell (BCr,Sw,VFWD). Sixty other green-wings were reported, including a high of 14 on 9/19 at HC (AMD). Results of censuses at MNWR and by plane by VFWD contrast the local versus regional abundance ratios of American Black Ducks to Mallards in the Champlain Valley. Mallards outnumbered black ducks by 6 to 1 in August with the ratio in favor of Mallard declining to 3 to 1 by November at MNWR (JBG). Mallards outnumbered black duck 2 to 1 on the 9/28 aerial survey; by 11/19 numbers were even, with black duck outnumbering Mallard by 5 to 1 at Sandbar Wildlife Management Area (hereafter SB). High counts were 1600 on 10/29 at MNWR (JBG), 1012 at SB on 9/28 (BCr,Sw,VFWD), and 2556 at MNWR on 11/19 (BCr,VFWD). Other high counts among the more than 1000 other black ducks reported were 331 on L. Champlain, Addison to Charlotte, on 10/11 (WGE,NLM, RBL), and 122 at Vernon on 11/22 (JJC). The high count for Mallard at MNWR was 5180 on 10/21 (JBG), 1094 were reported by the survey of 9/28 at SB (BCr, SW,VFWD). Over 1000 other Mallards were reported including a peak count of 250 at Burlington on 11/22 (WAM). A hen Mallard was seen with 10 downy offspring on 8/27 at Woodstock (JMN). MNWR high counts for Northern Pintail were 50 each on 9/20 and 10/21 (JBG), 2 pintail were seen at East Creek, Orwell on the 9/28 aerial survey (BCr,Sw,VFWD), other pintail included 1 at Springweather Nature Area on 9/10 (WJN), 1 at Lewis Creek, Ferrisburg on 9/17 (JID,MCD), 1 at SB on 10/16 (JDM), 4 at SB on 10/22 (PFW,SAW), and 2 at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro on 11/22 (JJC). The peak Blue-winged Teal count at MNWR was 125 on 8/15 (JBG), 74 were counted from the air on 9/28 including 20 each on the east shore of North Hero, DCWMA, and East Creek (BCr,Sw,VFWD). Over 120 other blue-wings were reported with the last 3 at SB on 10/16 (JDM). Northern Shovelers were observed at MNWR to early November with a high count of 20 on 10/29 (JBG), the only other shovelers noted were a hen and drake at Burlington on 10/11 (JDM). Gadwall counts during October at MNWR averaged 25 per day with a high estimate of 50 on 10/21 (JBG), 20 were seen at MNWR on the 9/28 VFWD survey (BCr,Sw), other Gadwall were 2 at Blodgett's in Burlington from 8/4-11/8 (WAM,JDM), 1 at HC on 9/10 (WJN), and 2 at Vernon on 11/15 (JJC). After an August arrival, American Wigeon peaked at MNWR on 10/21 with an estimate of 110 (JBG), 96 were seen on the 9/28 aerial inventory with 76 at MNWR and 20 at East Creek (BCr,Sw,VFWD). Other wigeon included 1 seen at Burlington on 8/11 (WGE,NLM), 1 at HC on 9/19 (NLM,AMD), 1 found at Vernon on 9/28 (JJC), 5 at Timmouth on 10/9 (CJF), 1 at SB on 10/10 increased to 12 by 10/16 (JDM), and the last reported was at Arnold Bay, Panton on 11/29 (WAM). The waterfowl survey of 11/19 located 1505 Canvasback in Alburg Bay with an additional 75 at Highgate and 30 in the Alburg Passage (BCr,VFWD), only 4 others were reported with 1 at Berlin Pk. (ATA), and 2 at Grand Isle (RBL,PAT) on 11/1, and 1 at Rockingham on 11/25 (WJN). Four thousand Ring-necked Ducks were estimated per day at MNWR during October with a high count of 8000 from 9/30-

10/1 (JBG), results of the 9/28 VFWD aerial survey are comparable, with a grand total of 8715 with 7560 at MNWR (BCr,SW,VFWD), 144 other ring-necks were noted with maxima of 20 at South Bay, Newport on 9/29 (PFW, SAW), 71 at Grand Isle on 10/3 (WAM), and 28 at HC on 10/31 (NLM). Greater Scaup arrived at MNWR in October with high counts of 50 each on 10/21 and 11/20 (JBG), the vast majority of 2300 scaup counted by plane on 11/19 were probably greater, 1500 of these were in the Alburg Passage (BCr,VFWD), 15 other greater were reported from 10/3-11/15. The high estimate for Lesser Scaup at MNWR was 30 on 11/10 (JBG), twenty others were reported from 10/6-11/6 with a max. of 8 on the latter date at L. Carmi (PJM). An exceptional 137 Oldsquaw were reported, the first was a hen on Elfin L., Wallingford on 10/25 (ADM, fide BLR), a major migratory fallout took place on 11/1, 74 were observed on southern L. Champlain with most in West Addison (DLC, via BVM), and 50 were seen on northern L. Champlain including 15 at Grand Isle and 22 at Swanton (RBL,PAT), other oldsquaw were noted in Danby, Timmouth, on L. Carmi in Franklin, and on L. Dunmore, Salisbury. All three scoters were reported in August or early September. Non-breeding scoters often summer on the coast, however all are scarce in summer on fresh water south of nesting areas. Just over 100 Black Scoters were reported, with the first at Burton I., L. Champlain on 9/4 (RBL), good counts included 11 at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro on 10/22 (DUW, fide JJC), 12 at Swanton on 11/1 (RBL,PAT), 17 on Berlin Rd. on 11/11 (ATA), and 35 on Meach Cove, Shelburne on 11/15 (ATA). Only 19 Surf Scoters were reported, 1 seen on 8/5 at Nichols Pt., Grand Isle must have summered on L. Champlain (CCR,JWF,PW), all others were reported from 10/11-11/27 with a max. of 5 on the former date in Addison and Panton (RBL,WGE,NLM). The first of 80 White-winged Scoters were 6 on 8/17 at Savage I., L. Champlain (CCR,JWF), high counts were 18 on 10/3 at Panton (RBL), and 21 on 10/11 in Addison and Panton (WGE,NLM,RBL), others were reported from L. Morey in Fairlee, Brattleboro, L. Carmi, and Timmouth. Common Goldeneye were seen throughout the season at MNWR with a maximum estimate of 60 on 10/21 (JBG), many of 3002 seen on the 11/19 aerial survey were in New York State but 575 were observed in Alburg and Kelly Bays (BCr,VFWD), 890 others were reported with a high count of 425 on the Maquam shore of Swanton 11/1 (RBL,PAT). The male BARROW'S GOLDENEYE present in Vernon from 11/12 onward was probably the same one that wintered there 1986-87 (JJC). Bufflehead arrived at MNWR in the third week of October with a max. of 50 recorded on 11/10 (JBG), the earliest of 188 others were 2 on Timmouth Rd. on 10/15 (CJF), high counts were 16 on 10/26 at the Retreat Meadows (JJC), 67 on northern L. Champlain on 11/1 with 39 in Swanton (RBL, PAT), and 25 at Burlington on 11/8 (WAM). The high count of Hooded Merganser at MNWR was 90 on 10/21 (JBG), 133 others were reported with maxima of 14 on 11/1 at Newport (PFW,SAW), 13 on Shelburne Rd. on 11/8 (WAM), and 14 on L. Bomoseen on 11/26 (CJF). Aerial counts of mergansers were not relegated to a particular species, but it is safe to assume the vast majority were Common Mergansers, 100 of 171 mergansers seen on 9/28 were in St. Albans Bay (BCr,SW,VFWD), 409 of 551 on 11/19 were found in New York State (BCr, VFWD). Other high counts from 990 others reported were 121 in Addison, Panton and Ferrisburg on 10/11 (RBL,NLM,WGE), 175 on Shelburne Rd. on 11/26 (WAM), 112 in Orwell on 11/27 (SBL,BLR), and 200+ on L. Carmi on 11/30 (PJM). The only Red-breasted Merganser reported was on L. Pinneo, Quechee on 11/1 (NLM). The two reports of Ruddy Duck were 1 on 10/3 at Vernon (NLM,JJC, et al.), and 2 at HC on 10/22 (WJN).

with an additional 221 reported by other observers, high counts included 14 on 8/26 at Rockingham (WJN), 14 at DCWMA on 8/8 (WGE,NLM), and 15 over Eagle Mt., Milton on 8/12 (WGE,RBL, NLM), the last reported was at L. Bomoseen on 10/20 (MBN). One hundred three Osprey were observed by hawkwatchers; over 40 others were reported, high counts were 11 at Lincoln Hill, Hinesburg on 9/17 (MPB), and 26 on 9/19 at Hartford (NLM), the last was seen at Mt. Holly on 10/24 (WJN). At least 12 Bald Eagles (2 on hawk watches) were reported throughout the season, 8 of which were adult, an imm. was seen at HC from August to 10/3 with 2 present on 8/6 (AMD). Lamentably, an ad. was shot in Ludlow in late August (fide VINS). Seventy-four Northern Harriers were observed during hawk watches and over 100 others were reported, birds per observer hour (POH) were 1.5 times greater than in autumn 1986, high counts were 13 in Addison on 8/29 (RBL), and 11 at Lincoln Hill on 9/17 (MPB). Over 435 Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported with 402 on hawk watches, the best counts submitted were 34 at Putney Mt. on 9/15 (JJC), and 45 at Putney Mt. on 9/23 (AGK). Cooper's Hawk numbers were much higher than average due to a generous high count of 14 on 9/15 at Putney Mt. (JJC), 20 others were seen on hawk watches and 14 were reported independently. Twenty-three Northern Goshawks were reported including 11 from hawk watches, one was seen killing a grouse in Starksboro on 11/20 (MPB). Three dozen Red-shouldered Hawks were reported with 29 on hawk watches, October hawk watches produced maxima of 8 on 10/12 at Mt. Philo (SRA), and 9 at Lincoln Hill on 10/31 (PAT), the last was an injured ad. found at Ascutney on 11/16 (NER, VINS). Per observer-hour figures for Broad-winged Hawk were two times higher than autumn 1986, reflecting the "hit-or-miss" nature of documenting this raptor's migrations, nearly 2400 were reported. High counts included 127 at Putney Mt. on 9/14 (JJC), 110 at Paine Mt. (WHB), and 499 at Putney Mt. (JJC) on 9/15, 486 at Mt. Philo on 9/17 (JID), 171 at Hartford on 9/19 (NLM), 117 at Mt. Holly on 9/23 (WJN) (both of the latter counts were taken under overcast drizzly skies), and 386 at Putney Mt. on 9/23 (AGK), the last broad-wing was seen at Winhall on 10/13 (WJN). Over 500 Red-tailed Hawks were reported including 375 on hawk watches. As usual the autumn migration peaked in mid- to late-October with maxima of 69 at Mt. Philo on 10/12 (SRA), and 51 on 10/31 at Lincoln Hill (PAT). Numbers of Rough-legged Hawks were not exceptional, 32 were reported with the first at Burlington on 10/23 (JDM), and two late November high counts of 7 each from DCWMA and its vicinity. Three Golden Eagles were reported, two of which were seen at surprisingly early dates, an imm. was observed in Salisbury on 8/30 (RCD), an ad. was found at DCWMA on 9/4 (JID,MCD), and a sub-ad. with two pursuing ravens was noted in Thetford on 11/7



GOLDEN EAGLE and  
COMMON RAVEN

MARTIN

VULTURES, HAWKS, AND FALCONS

Thirty Turkey Vultures were seen on hawk watches

(NLM). Over 300 American Kestrels were reported with 124 on hawk watches. This falcon was seen in the Champlain Lowlands through November but had largely vacated other parts of Vermont by late October. High counts included 28 on 8/8 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and 22 on 9/17 at Lincoln Hill (MPB). An imm. male released at BNP in July was netted at Cape May Pt., NJ on 10/12 (W.S. Clark). Eleven Merlin were reported with 5 on hawk watches, the earliest were at the Winooski River Delta, Colchester (WRD hereafter) (JDM) and HC (WJN) on 8/26, and the latest was seen from Mt. Philo on 10/13 (AP). Five Peregrine Falcons were seen by hawk watchers; there were 22 additional sightings including some multiple observations, peregrines were reported throughout the season, migrants were noted from mid-September to late-October.

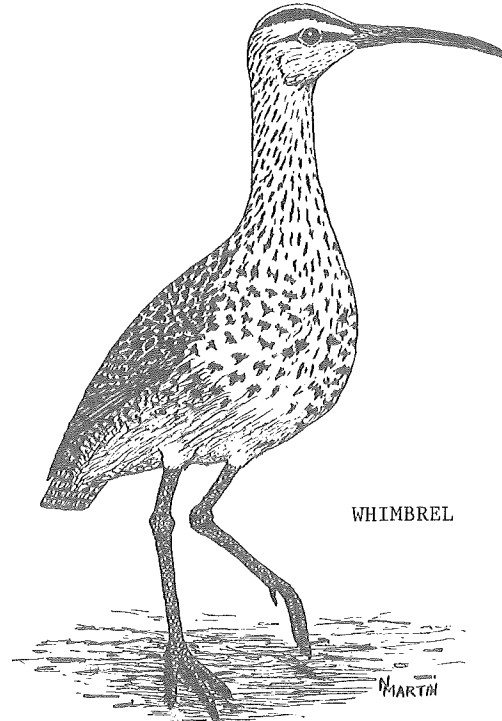
GAMEBIRDS THROUGH RAILS

Over 110 Ruffed Grouse were reported, including high counts of 15 in two broods at Winhall on 8/6 (WJN), 7 on 10/6 at South Duxbury (FAP), and 7 on 10/13 in Reading (FMH,GEH). Fourteen Gray Partridge at MNWR on 8/11 (JBG) were the only ones reported. There were four reports of Ring-necked Pheasants: from Shoreham (2), West Bridport, and Charlotte, it is not clear that there are any self-sustaining pheasant populations in the Green Mountain State. About 240 Wild Turkey were reported, including counts of 21 in Woodstock on 9/12 (WSC), 35 in Shoreham on 10/12 (ELW), 59 in two flocks on Grand Isle on 10/23 (DJH), and 17 in West Brattleboro on 10/30 (JJC). Eight half-grown poults were seen with a hen on 8/15 in Woodstock (JMN). Two Northern Bobwhite were observed at feeders in Washington (ATA) and East Corinth (CDS), the latter bird apparently survived the winter. Eleven Virginia Rails were reported with a high count of 4 on 8/8 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and a late date of 9/7 at Colchester (ATA). Eight Sora included an ad. with two juveniles on 8/8 at DCWMA (AMD), 2 on 8/1 in Vernon (P. Miller, fide JJC), and 2 at DCWMA on 8/22 (JID,MCD), which were the last found. Common Moorhens were reported in good numbers with maxima of 6 at DCWMA on 8/19 (JID, MCD), and 11 at East Creek, Orwell on 9/29 (ELW), the last were 2 at SB on 10/16 (JDM). Reports of American Coots included 5 at MNWR on 9/26 (JBG), 5 at McCuen Slang, Addison on 9/29 (SSW), 2 at WRD (JDM), 2 at Berlin Rd. (ATA), and 1 in the Timmouth Channel (CJF) on 10/16-17, the last was at the latter place on 10/22 (CJF).

WADERS

Black-bellied Plovers proved scarce with only 7 reported, the first was at HC on 8/10 (AMD) (this plover is rare in the Connecticut Valley), 1 was found on Savage I., L. Champlain on 8/18 (RBL), 1 was on Grand Isle on 8/23 (WGE, NLM,RBL), 2 were seen in Addison on 8/29 (RBL), 1 was at WRD on 9/6 (WGE,NLM), and the last was observed on Grand Isle on 11/1 (RBL, PAT). There were three reports of Lesser Golden-Plover, 24 were seen in Addison on 8/29 (RBL,DKL), Addison was also the address of 14 located on 10/8 (FAP), the last was observed migrating over Winhall on 10/18 (WJN), golden-plovers are very rarely seen in the Green Mountains. Most of the 56 Semipalmated Plovers reported were found around L. Champlain, the best count was 7 with 5 at WRD and 2 in Burlington on 8/24 (JDM), the only one reported away from the Champlain Lowlands was at TwDR from 8/19-28 (ATA), the last was at Burlington on 10/13 (JDM). Just under 770 Killdeer were reported, high counts were 75 on 8/15 at Newport (PFW,SAW), and 82 at Vernon on 9/19 (JJC), the last found were 3 at Barre on 11/4 (ATA). Over 80 Greater Yellowlegs were reported with high counts of 9 on 8/6 at DCWMA (NBN), and 10 on 8/28 on L. Champlain in St. Albans (CCR), the last were 3 at Swanton, Grand Isle, and St. Albans respectively on 11/1 (RBL,PAT).

There were reports of 51 Lesser Yellowlegs, the best count was 10 on 8/19 at DCWMA (JID,MCD), and the latest were 2 at Shelburne Bay on 10/18 (WAM). Among the 30 Solitary Sandpipers reported was a high count of 6 on 8/8 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and late reports of 9/29 at the Barton River Marsh, Newport (PFW,SAW), and 10/3 at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro (NLM,JJC, et al.). It was unfortunate that the documentation of 2 Willetts on 9/15 at Gull Rock, North Hero was insufficient to satisfy the Vermont Bird Records Committee, as the observer surely is well acquainted with this species. Sixty-five Spotted Sandpipers were reported, 36 were observed along the shores of the Champlain Islands and Franklin County on 8/12 (WGE,RBL,NLM), and the last was at Shoreham on 10/12 (ELW). Thirteen Upland Sandpipers were observed on 6 dates during August including a high of 5 at DCWMA on the 8th (WGE, NLM), 1 at South Londonderry on the 21st was a local rarity (WJN), the last were 3 at DCWMA on the 30th (WAM), others were seen in Ferrisburg and Grand Isle. A WHIMBREL sighted at Burlington on 8/24 (JDM) was a



WHIMBREL

splendid find. An HUDSONIAN GODWIT was nicely photographed in Grand Isle on 9/27 (DJH). Three of four Ruddy Turnstone reports were from Gull Rock in North Hero with 1 there on 8/28, 3 on 9/3, and 1 on 9/15 (CCR,JWF), another turnstone was seen in Burlington on 8/30 (WAM). Just over 40 Sanderling were reported; the 10 at DCWMA on 8/5 were locally rare as well as the first of the season (JDM). The best count was 17 on 8/24 with 10 at WRD and 7 at Burlington (JDM), juveniles were first seen on 8/28, and the latest were 2 on 11/1 at Burlington (WAM,DLC). Over 170 Semipalmated Sandpipers were noted, almost all were observed in the Champlain Lowlands, with 3 at TwDR on 8/26 (ATA) the only exceptions, the high count was 50 on 9/6 at DCWMA (WGE,NLM), and the last was a juv. at Popasquash I., St. Albans on 10/6 (CCR). The scarce Western Sandpiper was observed at WRD on 9/5 (JDM). The Vermont Bird Records Committee is not aware of any specimen or photographic evidence of this species' occurrence in Vermont. They have made a special request for anyone who has the camera equipment, and the luck to find this rare migrant, to submit good photographs for the permanent record. Just under 150 Least Sandpipers were reported, high counts of 10-15 were recorded from mid-August to early September at TwDR, DCWMA, WRD, and Shelburne Bay, and the last were

3 at Burlington on 9/16 (JDM). The only White-rumped Sandpiper was an ad. sighted at a pond on Slang Rd., Panton on 9/6 (WGE,NLM). Two juvenile Baird's Sandpipers were observed, 1 at Popasquash I. on 9/3 (CCR, JWF), and another at WRD on 9/6 (WGE,NLM). Forty of 42 Pectoral Sandpipers were reported from the Champlain Lowlands, the max. count was 7 at DCWMA on 8/26 (JDM), and the last was at Shelburne Bay on 11/1 (WAM, DLC), the other 2 were seen in the southern Connecticut Valley in late August. The only Purple Sandpiper reported this autumn was found on Popasquash I. on 11/1 (RBL,PAT). Dunlin are usually a common late autumn transient on L. Champlain, therefore the 2 reports for this autumn were remarkably few, 4 observed on 8/31 at St. Albans Bay (JID,MCD), and 1 at WRD on 11/3 (JDM) were a bit early and late respectively. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper was reported without documentation from Addison on 9/7 (WS,MBN,DLC). Short-billed Dowitcher reports included 1 on an unspecified date at Grand Isle (RBL), 2 juveniles at WRD from 8/11-30 (m. ob.), and 3 at DCWMA from 8/30-9/4 (JID,MCD,MBN). Over 40 Common Snipe were reported with top counts of 8 each on 8/26 at TWDR (ATA), and 9/5 at WRD (JDM), the last prior to the usual few winter sightings was at Shelburne Bay on 11/8 (WAM). American Woodcock have completely bounced back from their low population ebb of 1982 (CJF), 55 were reported including a high count of 8 on 10/15 at South Wallingford (CJF), and a late date of 11/1 at Timmouth (CJF). A well photographed RED PHALAROPE at Vernon on 10/4 (JJC) was the 14th for Vermont but only the second for the upper Connecticut Valley.

(RBL), and 267 in the same region on 11/1 (RBL,PAT). Up to 1200 Ring-billed Gulls in a day were reported on L. Champlain during the season, birds dispersed daily from L. Champlain turning up in Rutland, on L. Carmi, and on Berlin Pd.; the high count at L. Memphremagog was 144 on 8/9 (PFW,SAW), the high count of migrants in the Connecticut Valley was 68 at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro on 11/15 (JJC). Herring Gulls were seen throughout the season on L. Champlain with high counts of 660 on the northern third of the Lake on 8/12 (RBL,WGE,NLM), and 400 in Burlington on 11/27 (JDM). Migrant and wandering Herring Gulls were noted in other parts of Vermont as early as late September, maxima away from L. Champlain were 250 at Berlin Pd. on 11/11 (ATA), and 134 at the Retreat Meadows on 11/29 (WGE,NLM). Great Black-backed Gulls were also noted throughout autumn on L. Champlain with up to 26 seen in a day in August and a maximum of 75 on 11/27 at Burlington (JDM). Others reported included 5 at Moore Reservoir, Concord on 10/15 (PFW,SAW), and a high of 11 at the Retreat Meadows (JJC). Two SABINE'S GULLS were detected on L. Champlain in Panton on 10/3, 1 remained to 10/5 and was well photographed (see Am. Birds 42:16) (RBL, et al.); this is the first report of this handsome pelagic gull for Vermont. The high of 84 Common Terns at St. Albans Bay on 9/3 (CCR,JWF) was drastically lower than last autumn's 250, an ad. at HC on 8/29 was remarkable (JJC,TEJ), the latest was seen on L. Champlain in Addison on 10/11 (RBL,WGE,NLM). Apparently all Black Terns had left the state by the end of July as none were reported.

DOVES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

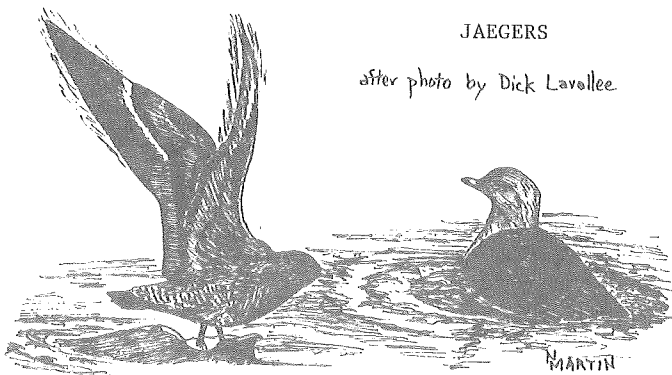
Reports of Rock Doves were unremarkable. Just over 385 Mourning Doves were reported including a high count of 75 on 10/3 at Vernon (NLM,JJC, et al.). The Black-billed Cuckoo was reported in good numbers, 21 were noted with a max. of 3 on 8/8 at Ferrisburg (JID, MCD), and the last of 4 reported into September was at Winhall on 9/21 (WJN). Reports of Yellow-billed Cuckoo included 1 at Winhall on 8/14 (WJN), 1 in Brandon on 9/29 (SSW), and a window-kill in Brattleboro on 10/9 (DP, fide JJC). The population estimate for Eastern Screech-Owl at MNWR was 10 (JBG), others reported were 1 at North Hero State Park on 8/13 (WGE, NLM), and 2 at Ferrisburg on 8/22 (JID,MCD). Seven of the 15 Great Horned Owls reported were from the Champlain Lowlands. A phenomenal 11 Snowy Owls were reported; this total is just 4 short of the grand total for all previous Fall RVB. The first Snowy Owl was found at Burlington from 11/1-15 (WAM, DLC), others were 1 at Plainfield (MFM), and 1 at MNWR on 11/7 (JBG), 1 in Charlotte on 11/8 (DLe), 1 in Vernon on 11/15 (P. Miller, fide JJC), 1 in Cornwall on 11/15 that subsequently died (AP), 1 in Ferrisburg on 11/16 (CCR,RBL,Pwi), 1 in Rutland Town on 11/23 (Rutland Herald photo), 1 in Addison on 11/27 (SBL,BLR), 1 at Peacham Pd. on 11/28 (AVG,CCF), and one which wintered at Alburg which arrived in "late fall" (CBo). There were 19 scattered reports of Barred Owls with a high count of 3 at Ferrisburg on 8/22 (JID,MCD). A Short-eared Owl was present in Essex Center from early November onward (RSe), and 4 were at DCWMA on 11/27 (SBL,BLR). An Asio owl (long-ear or short-ear) was seen at the La Platte Nature Area in Shelburne on 11/28 (WAM). Migration by Common Nighthawks was detectable by mid-August, 540 nighthawks were reported with maxima of 192 on 8/31 at White River Jct. (NLM), and 250+ on 9/7 at Brattleboro (JJC), the last was at Winhall on 9/24 (WJN).

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Just over 320 Chimney Swifts were reported with a high count of ca. 200 on 8/30 at Brattleboro (NLM), and a late date of 9/10 at White River Jct. (NLM). About 120 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were reported,

JAEGERS

after photo by Dick Lavallee.



GULLS AND TERNS

It was a good autumn for jaegers, which species remains a matter of conjecture however. A jaeger seen on 10/3 on L. Champlain at Addison and 2 photographed 1 mi. north of Savage I., Grand Isle on 10/26 were initially identified as POMARINE JAEGERS, and 2 or more seen in Georgia on the latter date were called PARASITIC JAEGERS (RBL). Examination of the photos and descriptions by experts (L.R. Bevier, W.R. Petersen) casts doubt upon any firm identification beyond elimination of Long-tailed Jaeger. There is no better testimony to the difficulties involved in relying on sight records and photos to document the occurrence of birds, especially for notoriously difficult groups. The LITTLE GULL, while rare, is now regular on L. Champlain; 12 were observed including an ad. photographed near Savage I. on 8/12 (RBL,WGE,NLM), 1 was on Lazy Lady I., St. Albans Bay and another was near Burton I., North Hero on 8/28 (CCR), 1 was seen off-and-on 9/4-26 in Georgia with 5 observed on the latter date (RBL), another was found in St. Albans Bay on 9/26 (RBL), 2 were seen at Chimney Pt., Addison on 11/16 (RBL,CCR,Pwi), and an ad. was sighted in Buttoh Bay, Ferrisburg on 11/27 (WGE,NLM). About 2500 Bona-parte's Gulls were reported, the only non-L. Champlain sighting was of a single at Vernon on 11/1 (JM, fide JJC), high counts on L. Champlain included 660 in Grand Isle and Franklin Counties on 8/12 (WGE,NLM,



the high count was 7 on 8/13 at Mud Creek WMA (WGE, NLM), several hummers were reported into the fourth week of September, the latest was a male at Marlboro on 10/7 (WDN). One hundred Belted Kingfishers were reported throughout the season with a max. of 7 at Shelburne Rd. on 9/7 (JID,MCD). Red-headed Woodpecker reports included 1 at Shoreham on 9/15 (ELW), an imm. at Londonderry on 10/27 (WSA), and an imm. that appeared at a North Danville feeding station in late autumn and overwintered, undergoing its molt into ad. plumage (AMA). Over 50 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported, the best count was 8 on 8/22 at Reading (FMH,GEH), and the latest were 1 each at Reading (FMH, GEH), and Colchester (JDM) on 10/9. Seven sapsuckers were banded at BNP with the last on 10/7 (VINS). The number of Hairy Woodpeckers reported exceeded the total of Downy Woodpeckers (60 vs. 50), normally the Downy is the more numerous of these two, 1 each were banded at BNP (VINS). There were five reports of single Black-backed Woodpeckers, these included 8/1 at Moose Bog, Ferdinand (WGE,NLM), a male at Maidstone on 8/16 (WGE,NLM), a female at Lincoln on 9/24 (PAT), a male at Reading on 10/13 (FMH), and a male at Bruce Rd., Sheffield on 10/18 (PFW). About 300 Northern Flickers were reported, a large flight was detected 9/19-22 with counts of 40+ at HC (AMD), and 35+ at Hartford (NLM) on the 19th, and 24 at Woodstock on the 22nd (NLM), most were gone by mid-October, 7 were banded at BNP (VINS), and a bird with mixed red and yellow primaries was found in late August near Burlington (JJA). Over 50 Pileated Woodpeckers were detected, no count exceeded two and 1 was banded at BNP on 10/15 (VINS).

#### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Thirteen Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported with a max. of 4 on 8/16 in Maidstone and Ferdinand (WGE,NLM), 1 was banded at BNP on 8/21, the first since 1983 (VINS), two were reported on very late dates, 1 on 9/30 at Ferrisburg exceeded the previous record by 2 days (JID,MCD), but 1 identified at Reading on 10/14 and 15 was extremely late. Reports such as this should be submitted with comments since Bull, in Birds of New York State, proclaims all olive-sides reported later than "early October are probably misidentified phoebes and/or wood pewees ..". Almost 100 Eastern Wood-Pewees were reported, high counts were from August with 16 at North Hero State Park, 12 at MNWR, and 8 at Mud Creek Wildlife Management Area on 8/13 (WGE,NLM), and 7 at Reading on 8/15 (FMH,GEH), wood-pewees departed tardily with late reports of 10/6 at Rochester (SSW), and 10/7 at Shoreham (ELW). Migratory Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were seen early in August, 7 were reported with 2 banded at BNP including the last on 9/17 (VINS). Fifty "Traill's"-group Empidonaces were reported including a record 23 banded at BNP (VINS), 18 of these 50 were identified as Alder Flycatchers with a high count of 4 on 8/4 in Hartland (WGE), and late reports of 8/26 at West Brattleboro (identified by call) (JJC), and 8/30 at Woodstock (JMN). Nine Willow Flycatchers were noted, 2 at West Brattleboro on 8/26 were the latest confident report based on voice (JJC). The last "Traill's" Flycatcher banded at BNP was netted on 9/4 (VINS). Twenty-nine of the 55 Least Flycatchers were banded at BNP (VINS) the most there in many years, the best count of this domineering little bird was 5 at BNP on 8/31 (VINS), the last was at Shoreham on 9/20 (ELW). Over 150 Eastern Phoebes were reported, high counts were 7 on 8/30 at BNP (JMN), and 10 at DCWMA on 9/4 (JID,MCD), and the last was observed in Brandon on 10/21 (SSW). The 52 phoebes banded at BNP was twice the previous high for VINS. As usual, few of the 22 Great Crested Flycatchers were observed after August, high counts did not exceed three and the last was at Woodstock on 9/13 (JMN), 1 banded at BNP on 9/4 was

the first captured during autumn since 1979 (VINS). Almost 300 Eastern Kingbirds were reported, high counts included 20 on 8/12 at Isle La Motte (RBL,WGE, NLM), 31 in Newport and Coventry on 8/15 (PFW,SAW), and 35 at Addison on 8/29 (RBL), the last was at New Haven on 9/14 (JRA), 4 were netted at BNP including one first caught in 1986 (VINS). Nearly 300 Horned Larks were reported; there were scattered August sightings from breeding areas, high counts of migrants or wintering birds included 100 on 11/14 at DCWMA (FAP), and 100 in Bridport on 11/27 (BLR,SBL). Reports of about 60 Purple Martins came from South Hero, DCWMA, Alburg, Grand Isle, and North Hero, the last was at Addison on 8/29 (RBL). A modest total of 2100 Tree Swallows was reported with a max. of 400 on 8/18 at Shoreham (ELW), and a late report of 10/3 when 8 were seen in Addison (RBL). There were scattered August reports of Northern Rough-winged Swallows with the last at Addison on 8/29 (RBL). Almost 300 Bank Swallows were observed including high counts of 70+ from Grand Isle on 8/12 (RBL,WGE,NLM), and 64 from Alburg on 8/23 (WGE,RBL,NLM), late birds were 1 at South Londonderry (WJN), and 2 at WRD (JDM) on 8/30. Forty-one Cliff Swallows were reported, high counts were less than ten and the latest were 3 at Addison (RBL) 6 at the Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro, and 2 at Westminster (TEJ,JJC) on 8/29. Almost 1400 Barn Swallows were reported, high counts were 300 on 8/15 at Leicester (SSW), and 250 at Addison on 8/29 (RBL). The last sightings are premature, with singles at South Bay, Newport (PFW,SAW), and Burlington (WGE,NLM) on 9/6. A Barn Swallow nest in Weybridge fledged on 8/21 (MBN).

#### JAYS THROUGH WRENS

All Gray Jay reports were from the Northeast Highlands with 2 at Victory Bog on 9/19 (FAP), and two reports from Ferdinand in mid-October including 1 at Moose Bog on the 17th (FAP), and 3 on the 19th (MFM). Over 700 Blue Jays were reported with the peak of migration by imms. during the third week of September. High counts were 60+ at Bald Mt., Mendon (NLM), and 57 at Paine Mt., Northfield (WHB) on 9/15, and 90 at Shoreham (ELW), and 106 at Lincoln Hill, Hinesburg (MPB) on 9/17, counts at feeding stations ranged up to 25, and 4 were banded at BNP (VINS). Counts of migratory American Crows were less spectacular than in 1986, the migration was less compressed into a few days as shown by high counts of only 800-1000 at Mt. Philo on 10/22 (AP), and 760 at the same place on 10/24 (JID,MCD). About 120 Common Ravens were reported, including counts of 20 at Woodstock on 8/25 (JMN), and 18 at Ferdinand on 11/11 (MFM), ravens pioneering the lowlands included birds observed in Brandon, at L. Cami, and in Shelburne. Seven-hundred Black-capped Chickadees were reported with high counts of 67 at North Hero State Park on 8/13 (WGE,NLM), and 60 at Reading on 8/15 (FMH), 95 were netted at BNP including 61 new and 34 caught in prior seasons, 1 of these was first captured on 4/21/1981 (VINS). All Boreal Chickadee reports were from the Northeast Highlands, the high count was 8 at Moose Bog on 10/17 (FAP), 25 others were reported including sightings from Maidstone, Sheffield, and Victory. The 32 Tufted Titmouses reported was the best autumn total since 1979, several observers noted groups of 4 and among the more northerly reports were birds seen in Fairlee (NB) and Underhill (JS). Seventy Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported with maxima of 20 on 8/16 in Ferdinand and Maidstone (WGE,NLM), and 10 at South Duxbury on 8/20 (FAP). The total of White-breasted Nuthatches reported just exceeded 100, high counts were 13 at North Hero State Park on 8/13 (WGE,NLM), and 10 at Reading on 8/22 (FMH, GEH), 6 were banded at BNP (VINS). About 50 Brown Creepers were reported with a max. of 8 on 8/13 at North Hero State Park

(WGE,NLM), and 7 banded at BNP (VINS). Creepers are not often seen at feeders but one patronized suet in Sheffield during November (PFW,SAW). Until the next bitter winter in the south, the Carolina Wren will be regular, if rare, in Vermont; 2 were located this autumn, at East Charlotte on 8/13 and in Ferrisburg on 10/1 (JID,MCD). Less than 30 House Wrens were reported, young were still in nests at Shoreham on 8/1 (ELW), and MNWR on 8/13 when 6 ads. were counted for the max. report (WGE,NLM), the 11 banded at BNP tied a record total (VINS), the last was at Shoreham on 9/27 (ELW). The 57 Winter Wrens improved upon the 1986 total which had been the high for the '80s, high counts included 10 in Maidstone and Ferdinand on 8/16 (WGE,NLM), and 5 on the Killington section of the Long Trail on 8/26 (FMH,GEH), 4 were banded at BNP (VINS), reports extended through November. Most of the two dozen Marsh Wrens were reported from the Champlain Lowlands, the high count was 8 at WRD on 8/11 (WGE,NLM), late reports included 1 at WRD on 10/10 (JDM), and 2 at TWDR on 10/15 (ATA), (I am unaware of any previous sighting from TWDR), the second ever banded by VINS was netted at BNP on 10/2 (CCR,VINS).

#### KINGLETS THROUGH THRUSHES

The 259 Golden-crowned Kinglets was the best total reported during the '80s, exceeding the next highest total (1986) by 74. Several family groups with ads. feeding fledglings were seen in Ferdinand on 8/1, ads. were still feeding fledglings in Washington on 8/27 (ATA); high counts included 34 in Maidstone and Ferdinand on 8/16 (WGE,NLM), 28 in Stratton and Somerset on 8/22 (JJC), and 25 on the Long Trail's Killington section on 8/26 (FMH,GEH), migrants arrived in late September and early October with maxima of 20 each at Ferrisburg on 10/18 and Mt. Philo on 10/24 (JID,MCD), 11 were banded at BNP (VINS). Just under 200 Ruby-crowned Kinglets were reported, migrants arrived in non-breeding areas by mid-September with 3 at Woodstock on 9/12 (JMN), high counts were 15 at South Duxbury on 10/3 (FAP), 16 at West Brattleboro (JJC), and 25 banded at BNP on 10/8 (VINS), 50 were banded at BNP, the most banded by VINS since 1975, the last was at HC on 11/22 (NLM). Reports of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers included 3 at WRD from 8/9-26 (JDM, et al.), 2 at SB on 8/12 (WGE,NLM, RBL), 2 on Lewis Creek, Ferrisburg on 8/20 (JID, MCD), and 1 at Brandon on 9/7 (SSW). About 130 Eastern Bluebirds were reported; five hand-raised juveniles released at BNP in early summer were netted by banders in October (VINS), high counts were 9 on 9/23 at Shoreham (ELW), and 10 on 10/20 at BNP (NLM), the last were 6 in Tinmouth (Mr. Bell, fide NS), and 1 at Dorset on 11/1 (EFG). Forty Veeries, while an average total for the mid-70s, was the best number reported in a number of years, 21 banded at BNP were the most since 1977 (VINS), high counts were from August with 5 at MNWR on the 13th (WGE,NLM), and 4 at BNP on the 21st (VINS), the last was found in Colchester on 9/19 (JDM). The two Gray-cheeked Thrushes reported were at HC on 8/26 (WJN) and North Ferrisburg on 10/2 (JID,MCD). Fifty Swainson's Thrushes were reported, high counts were 5 on 8/29 in Stratton (JJC), and 19 banded at BNP on 9/21 and 22 (VINS), 13 others were banded at BNP, the latest were at Shoreham (ELW), and Colchester (JDM) on 10/12. Forty Hermit Thrushes were banded at BNP, the most since 1974 (VINS), 72 others were reported, including a high count of 13 on 8/1 in Essex County (WGE,NLM). Twenty-three Wood Thrushes were reported, no counts exceeded three, 1 was banded at BNP (VINS), and the last was at Winhall on 9/22 (WJN). High counts of American Robin were from mid-October with 600+ at Woodstock on the 11th (JMN), and 250 at North Ferrisburg on the 20th (JID,MCD), 156 were banded at BNP with a max. of 17 on 10/15, and a return of 1 caught in 1986 (VINS).

#### MIMICS THROUGH VIREOS

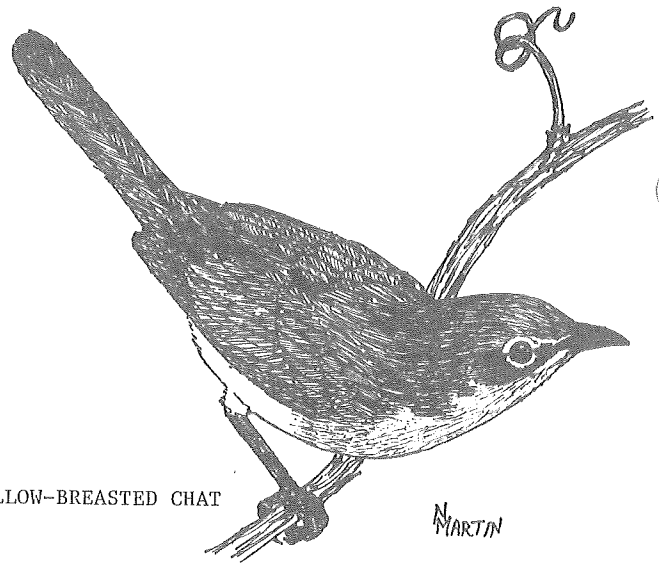
Nearly 200 Gray Catbirds were reported including a record 94 banded at BNP (VINS), an ad. was observed feeding a juv. on 8/3 at Weybridge (MBN), high counts included 12 on 9/16 at BNP (NLM), and 10 at HC on 9/28 (WJN), the last was at Dorset on 11/1 (EFG). Fourteen Northern Mockingbirds were reported from Addison, Brattleboro, Colchester, Ferrisburg, Panton, Pittsford, Shelburne, Shoreham, and South Burlington. Only 6 Brown Thrashers were reported, this total is shockingly low, I hope this only shows it was poorly reported, one was observed "anting" in West Brattleboro in early August (JJC), and the last was seen at BNP on 9/16 (NLM), 2 birds banded earlier in 1987 were caught during autumn at BNP (VINS). Water Pipits were reported in rather low numbers with only 117 detected, the first 10 reported were two weeks later than normal on 10/2 at Shoreham (ELW), the high count rapidly followed with 60+ in Vernon on 10/3 (NLM,JJC, et al.), the last was seen in Vernon on 11/15 (JJC). A lone Bohemian Waxwing was detected at South Duxbury on 11/30 (FAP). High counts of Cedar Waxwing included 100+ in Stratton on 9/20 (JJC), and 150+ on 9/23 at BNP, 56 of which were banded on 9/22 (NLM,VINS), a record 270 were banded for the season at BNP. There were 4 November reports, with 3 from eastern Vermont the reverse of the usual pattern. Northern Shrikes were seen in Shoreham on 10/15 (ELW), 11/3-24 in Fairlee (TL), and on 11/14 in Dorset (EFG). The European Starling remains common with counts ranging up to 2500 on 9/14 in Shelburne (MPB). Nearly 100 Solitary Vireos was the best autumn total of the '80s, the high count was an impressive 15 on 9/3 at Reading (FMH,GEH), 17 were banded at BNP with a max. of 4 on 9/22 (VINS), late birds included 3 at Washington (ATA), and 1 at Winhall (WJN) on 10/12. Half of 16 Yellow-throated Vireos were noted during September, the max. was 4 on 9/4 in Woodstock (JMN), the latest was seen in that town on 9/22 (JMN), and 2 were banded at BNP (VINS). Nearly 40 Warbling Vireos were reported with high counts of 7 on 8/12 at SB (WGE,NLM, RBL), and 6 on 9/5 at Weybridge (MBN), 5 were banded at BNP (VINS), and the last were 3 on 9/26 at Shoreham (ELW). The few Philadelphia Vireos were 1 at Winhall on 9/5, 1 banded at BNP on 9/11 (CCR,VINS), another at Winhall on 9/15 (WJN), and 1 at Mt. Philo on 9/24 (JID,MCD). There were reports of 152 Red-eyed Vireos including high counts of 18 at North Hero State Park on 8/13 (WGE,NLM), 21 in Maidstone and Ferdinand on 8/16 (NLM,WGE), and 11 in Stratton and Winhall on 9/5 (JJC), 29 were banded at BNP (VINS), and the last were 2 in Shoreham on 10/7 (ELW).

#### WOOD WARBLERS

A single Blue-winged Warbler was observed at West Brattleboro on 8/19 (JJC). Ninety-six Tennessee Warblers were reported. On 8/1 ads. fed fledglings in Lewis and Ferdinand (WGE,NLM), high counts were 14 on 9/5 in Stratton and Winhall (JJC), and 13 banded at BNP on 9/22 (VINS), 30 others were netted at BNP, and the latest were 3 on 10/7 at Shoreham (ELW). An Orange-crowned Warbler at Woodstock on 8/27 (JMN) was very well described, it was also much earlier than the majority of reports of this late migrant. The 128 Nashville Warblers was a much higher total than any over the last three years but it was still less than totals from 1982 and '83, the 59 banded at BNP was a record for VINS, high counts were 6 in Stratton and Winhall on 9/5 (JJC), 7 in Woodstock on 9/18 (JMN), and 9 banded at BNP on 9/22 (VINS), the last was netted at BNP on 10/8 (VINS). Fifteen Northern Parulas were detected with a high count of 6 on 8/16 in Maidstone and Ferdinand (WGE,NLM), 1 banded at BNP on 9/2, the first captured since 1981 (VINS), and a late report of an imm. female at Colchester on 10/11 (JDM). Just 4 of the 68 Yellow Warblers reported were

seen after 9/1, an ad. was feeding a fledgling at Brighton on 8/1 (WGE,NLM), high counts were 7 each on 8/12 at SB (WGE,RBL,NLM), and 8/13 at Mud Creek WMA (WGE, NLM), all of the 4 banded at BNP were captured during August, and the last was at Woodstock on 10/3 (JMN). Ninety-three Chestnut-sided Warblers was a well-above-average total, 17 were banded at BNP (VINS), maxima were 12 on 8/9 at South Duxbury (FAP), 8 in Woodstock on 8/27 (JMN), and 8 in Stratton and Winhall on 9/5 (JJC), the last reported were 2 at Mt. Philo on 9/24 (JID,MCD), late reports of ads. feeding juvs. included 8/9 in Washington (ATA), and 8/15 at West Brattleboro (JJC). The total of 123 Magnolia Warblers was better than usual, many of 22 observed on 8/1 in Essex County were still feeding juvs. (WGE, NLM), high counts included 11 in Stratton on 8/22 (JJC), 10 in Winhall on 9/15 (WJN), and 10 in Woodstock on 9/18 (JMN), 20 were banded at BNP (VINS), and late reports were on the early side with observations on 9/29 from Barre (ATA), and BNP (VINS). Only 13 Cape May Warblers were reported, a female at South Duxbury on 7/30 (FAP) is the earliest fall arrival of Cape May Warbler for RVB, 4 were banded at BNP including 2 on 9/11 and 2 on 9/14 (VINS), and the last was at Mt. Philo on 9/24 (JID,MCD). Just over 60 Black-throated Blue Warblers were reported, a female feeding a fledgling was seen in Maidstone on 8/1 (WGE,NLM), high counts were 8 in Stratton and Winhall (JJC), and 7 at Gile Mt., Norwich (WGE,NLM) on 9/5, late reports were 9/27 at South Duxbury (FAP), and 9/28 in Washington (ATA), 8 were banded at BNP (VINS). About 540 Yellow-rumped Warblers were reported, the 250 banded at BNP was a record for VINS, high counts were 40 at Mt. Philo on 9/24 (JID, MCD), and 62 ringed at BNP on 10/8 (VINS), the last reported was at Stockbridge on 11/14 (EH), 1 retrapped at BNP had been banded as an imm. in 1986. A little over 120 Black-throated Green Warblers were reported, 19 were banded at BNP (VINS), high counts were 18 on 8/22 in Stratton and Sunderland (JJC), and 8 in Woodstock on 9/18 (JMN), the last was in Shoreham on 10/8 (ELW). The 43 Blackburnian Warblers was the lowest total reported in the last 6 years, high counts were post-breeding totals from nesting areas and included 6 at South Duxbury on 8/9 (FAP), and 9 in Maidstone and Ferdinand on 8/16 (WGE, NLM), 3 were banded at BNP (VINS), this total is not surprising for this high-ranging species, the last was in Washington on 9/23 (ATA). Pine Warblers were detected at Colchester on 8/27 (by song) (JDM), and at West Dummerston on 9/17 (AGK, fide JJC). Four Prairie Warblers were still present on Church Hill in Woodstock on 8/7 (JMN), and a migrant was found in Winhall on 9/15 (WJN). The first of 22 Palm Warblers was seen at WRD on 9/7 (ATA), one of each race was banded at BNP (VINS), a max. of 4 was located at DCWMA on 10/8 (FAP), the latest was in Putney on 10/24 (DUW, fide JJC). Numbers of Bay-breasted Warblers were low with 42 reported, early migrants were 1 at MMWR and 2 at North Hero State Park on 8/13 (WGE,NLM), maxima were 9 at Bald Mt., Mendon on 9/12 (NLM), and 6+ on 9/20 in Woodstock (JMN), and the last was the season's lone capture at BNP on 9/22 (VINS). The 18 Blackpoll Warblers reported matched the poor showing of Autumn 1986, the high count was 4 on 9/20 in Woodstock (JMN), the only one banded at BNP was netted on 9/22 (VINS), and the last was at Shoreham on 10/7 (ELW). The only report of Cerulean Warbler was of a singing male still present at SB on 8/12 (WGE,NLM,RBL). Just over 40 Black-and-white Warblers were reported with a high count of 10 on 8/1 in Ferdinand and Maidstone (WGE, NLM), 10 banded at BNP (VINS), and 1 on a late date of 10/6 at Button Bay, Ferrisburg (JID,MCD). Seventy-eight American Redstarts were reported, 17 were banded at BNP (VINS), high counts were 17 on 8/1 in Essex County (WGE,NLM), and 8 in Reading on 8/23 (FMH,GEH), and the last was in Woodstock on 9/21 (CRP). Nineteen

of the 40 Ovenbirds reported were banded at BNP (VINS), the maximum report was 5 on 8/9 at South Duxbury (FAP), and the last 2 were noted on Bald Mt., Mendon (NLM,JPM,JBM), and at BNP (VINS) on 9/15. Nine Northern Waterthrushes were detected, 3 of these were banded at BNP (VINS), and the last was at Shoreham on 10/8 (ELW). The only Louisiana Waterthrush was found in Putney on 8/1 (TEJ). Sixteen Mourning Warblers were reported, 11 of which were banded at BNP (VINS), others included 3 single sightings at South Duxbury to 9/5 (FAP), 1 in Stratton on 9/5 (JJC), and 1 in Woodstock on 9/19 (JMN), the last was banded at BNP on 9/25 (VINS). A station record 196 Common Yellowthroats were banded at BNP (VINS), about 100 other yellowthroats were reported, the high count was 28 on 9/22 at BNP (VINS), and the last was at BNP on 10/27 (VINS). A retrapped yellowthroat at BNP proved to be 6 years old. Two Wilson's Warblers at Washington on 8/9 (ATA) were very early and the first of 32 reported, 11 were banded from 8/21-9/22 at BNP (VINS), no higher count than 3 was reported, and the last was notably tardy on 10/7 in Shoreham (ELW). Fifty-six Canada Warblers were reported, 10 were banded at BNP (VINS), the max. was 5 in half an hour on 8/27 in Woodstock (JMN), and the latest was at Shoreham on 9/21 (ELW). There was a late influx of reverse-migrant Yellow-breasted Chats, 1 was seen in Marlboro on 9/27 (JJC), 1 was found in Putney on 10/12 (JN, fide JJC), and an imm. was banded at BNP on 10/13 (CCR,VINS).

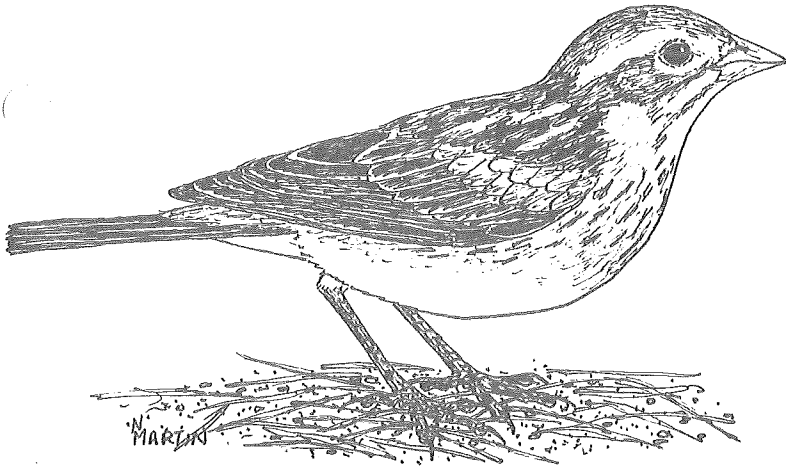


YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT

TANAGER THROUGH SPARROWS

The 76 Scarlet Tanagers was the best number reported since 1981, 28 were banded at BNP with a high of 5 on 8/25 (VINS), other maxima were 6 on 9/5 in Stratton and Winhall (JJC), and 7 in Woodstock on 9/18 (JMN), three tanagers carried into October including a very late one on 10/25 at Brandon (SSW). One hundred thirty-six Northern Cardinals were reported north to the northern Champlain Lowlands, Wheelock, and Lyndonville, there were also reports from Lincoln and Topsham where this popular bird is still scarce. Juvs. were still being fed by ads. at Rutland on 9/12 (NLM, JPM), 5 were banded at BNP (VINS), and the high count was 23 at North Ferrisburg on 9/4 (JID,MCD). Nearly 70 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported, the 18 banded at BNP was the highest there since 1981 (VINS), the max. was 6 on 8/13 at Mud Creek WMA (WGE,NLM), 5 were detected into October with the last on 10/26 at West Brattleboro (JJC). There were 47 Indigo Buntings reported, a record 17 were banded at BNP (VINS), four observers reported high counts of 4, and the last was



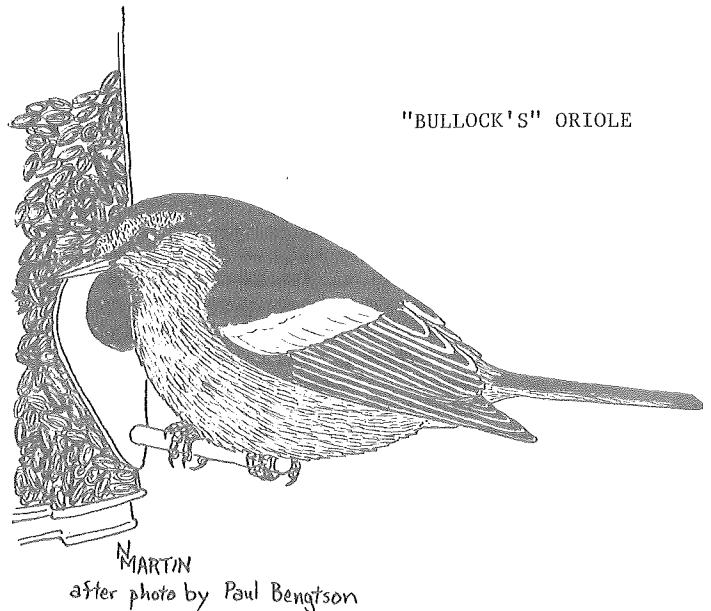


at Shoreham on 10/8 (ELW). An imm. male DICKCISSEL was found in Shoreham on 10/30 (ELW). Six of the 17 Rufous-sided Towhees reported were banded at BNP (VINS), the last were 2 on 10/12 at Tinnmouth (CJF). American Tree Sparrows at Shrewsbury (1) (LPS), and North Ferrisburg (4) (JID,MCD) on 10/4 were notably early, 200 others were reported with high counts of 20 at WRD on 11/3 (JDM), 20 in Bridport (SBL,BLR), and 22 in Addison (WGE,NLM) on 11/27, 18 were banded at BNP (VINS). Many totals of common sparrows were low this autumn, I believe this does not show a true decline but a lack of observer interest in weedy harvested fields and community gardens. One hundred thirty-four Chipping Sparrows was a pitiful total, the "high" count was just 12 during August in Woodstock (JMN), the 28 banded at BNP was a record (VINS), most late reports were from late October but two were observed in Woodstock on 11/28 (JMN). The 35 Field Sparrows was also a weak total, the high count was 6 on 8/5 at BNP (WGE), 21 were banded at BNP including the last reported on 10/15 (VINS). Ten of the 16 Vesper Sparrows were seen at DCWMA on 9/6 (WGE,NLM), 3 of 4 other reports were also from DCWMA including a late report of 9/26 (FAP), 4 were seen in Brandon on 9/24 (SSW). About 115 Savannah Sparrows were recorded including 2 banded at BNP on 10/2 and 13 (VINS), a max. of 32 at Vernon on 9/19 (JJC), and the last along the Connecticut R. at the Springfield/Rockingham town line on 10/15 (WJN). Two dozen Fox Sparrows were reported from 10/7 at Shoreham (ELW) to 11/19 at Winhall (WJN), with 1 banded at BNP on 10/23 (VINS). A weak total of only 300 Song Sparrows was reported, there was an active nest in Woodstock on 8/1 (JMN), and ads. were observed feeding juvs. on 8/16 in Weybridge (MBN), "high" counts were 23 at DCWMA on 8/2 (WGE, NLM), and 21 in Woodstock on 10/3 (JMN), 74 were banded at BNP (VINS). Just under 50 Lincoln's Sparrows were noted, the earliest migrant was about 5 days early on 8/26 in Woodstock (JMN), 30 were netted at BNP including a peak catch of 10 on 9/22 (VINS), another good count was 6 on 9/20 in Woodstock (JMN), the last was banded at BNP on 10/15 (VINS). A little over 80 Swamp Sparrows were reported, 14 were banded at BNP (VINS), and the best count was 11 on 10/7 in Tinnmouth (CJF). The White-throated Sparrow was the most numerous sparrow with 535 reported, however some observers believed that numbers were below average, 86 were banded at BNP with a max. of 10 netted on 10/9 (VINS), high counts included 50+ in Woodstock on 9/20 (JMN), and 40-50 in Shelburne on 10/18 (WAM). Early White-crowned Sparrows included 2 in Shoreham on 9/21 (ELW), and an imm. in Sheffield on 9/22 (PFW,SAW) these dates are 5-7 days prior to the average autumn arrival, 109 others were noted including 9 banded at

-45- BNP from 9/30-10/15 (VINS). High counts were 5-7 in Washington on 10/11 (ATA), 6 at South Duxbury on 10/12 (FAP), 7 imm. in Tinnmouth (CJF), and 9-12 in Washington on 10/14 (ATA), the last was at Shrewsbury on 11/8 (LPS). There were no truly noteworthy high counts in a total of 380 Dark-eyed Juncos, no more than 30 were seen in a day and 29 were banded at BNP (VINS). The earliest of about 720 Snow Buntings were 12 on 10/3 at Kingsland Bay, Ferrisburg (JID,MCD), the high count was 150 on 11/7 in Clarendon (CJF).

#### BLACKBIRDS THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

About 230 Bobolinks were reported, including high counts of 75 on 8/8 at DCWMA (AMD), and 100+ at South Slang, Ferrisburg on 8/30 (JID, MCD), the "late" report was of 2 at DCWMA on 9/6 (WGE,NLM). Selected high counts of Red-winged Blackbirds included 10,000 at DCWMA on 9/11 (FAP), and 6500 in Shelburne on 9/14 (MPB), a single red-wing was banded at BNP (VINS). Only 34 Eastern Meadowlarks were reported, a juv. was seen at West Glover on 8/8 (RVC), a "high" of 6 was recorded at DCWMA on 8/8 (WGE,NLM), and the last reported was at HC on 10/31 (NLM). Forty Rusty Blackbirds were detected from 9/24-10/15 with a max. of 20 at BNP on 10/14 (NLM). Several relatively small early season roosts of Common Grackles included 200+ at WRD on 8/11 (WGE,NLM), 110 at Lincoln on 9/6 (JRA), 300 in Reading on 8/20 (FMH,GEH), and 200 at South Duxbury on 9/2 (FAP), as the season progresses, grackles coalesce into much larger roosts such as 5000 in Colchester on 10/17 (DPK,SBL), and 900- 1000 in Shoreham on 10/29 (ELW), this means that after early September most observers seldom see any grackles. The Brown-headed Cowbird was reported throughout the season, but it was missed or seen only in small numbers by most observers. As in the red-wing and grackle, high counts reflect the gregariousness of the cowbird, a flock of 1000+ was at the VA hospital in White River Jct. on 9/24-25 (JMN,CCR). Most of the 46 Northern Orioles reported were noted during August, 9 were banded at BNP (VINS), high counts were 6 each on 8/13 at North Hero State Park (WGE,NLM), and 8/17 at BNP (VINS), the last "Baltimore" was seen in Brandon on 9/7 (SSW), a



"BULLOCK'S" ORIOLE

western "Bullock's" Oriole was discovered at a St. Johnsbury feeder on 11/16 and was seen there into December, this rara avis was excellently photographed to provide the first documented Vermont record of this race (PBE). The only Pine Grosbeak was noted at Winhall on 11/5 (WJN). About 225 Purple Finches were reported, August feeder counts included 22 on 8/2 in Sheffield (PFW,SAW), and 20+ in Washington on 8/9

(ATA), there were numerous November reports in southern and western Vermont including a count of 20 at Winhall on 11/10 (WJN), 9 were banded at BNP (VINS). Over 430 House Finches were reported north to Grand Isle and Lyndonville, juvs. with clinging down were seen being fed in Hartford on 9/10 (NLM), high counts included 35 in Grand Isle on 10/3 (RBL), and 45 in Weybridge on 11/21 (MBN), an albino House Finch was photographed at East Dorset (EL), 88 were banded at BNP with a max. of 14 on 9/11 (VINS). Both Red Crossbill reports were from August, 1 was at L. Carmi, Franklin on the 18th (PJM), and 4 were at Grout Rd., Stratton on the 22nd (JJC). There were widespread reports of good numbers of White-winged Crossbills during August, these birds appeared to be post-breeding wanderers although many males sang loudly and behaved territorially. Reports of White-winged Crossbills were received from Stratton, Lincoln, Plainfield, Pittsford, Cabot, Barre, Hardwick, Orange, Washington, Shrewsbury, Sheffield, Brighton, Ferdinand, Lewis, Maidstone, and Ferrisburg. High counts from Essex County included 100 each on 8/1 (WGE,NLM), and on 8/23 (WAM), a few were still around in November with six reports from Sheffield (PFW,SAW), and 1 in Ferrisburg on 11/27 (WGE). The only report of Common Redpoll was of a flock of 20 in Winhall on 11/10 (WJN). Reports of Pine Siskin presaged an invasion of considerable size with 850 noted. A few siskins were seen in the Northeast Kingdom during August and a few were in evidence around Woodstock by the end of September. Most observers reported their first siskins in early October, high counts were 100 in Reading on 10/13 (FMH,GEH), and 150+ at West Brattleboro on 10/23 (JJC). Siskins seemed less numerous in western Vermont. American Goldfinches were reported throughout the season although they were not common by the end of November. About 475 goldfinches were reported, fledglings were noted in Woodstock on 8/17 (JMN), and in Weybridge on 8/25 (MBN), the high count was 63 at West Brattleboro on 10/23 (JJC), and 9 were banded at BNP (VINS). Reports of Evening Grosbeaks followed the familiar pattern with a few seen during August at high elevations and in the north with large numbers not observed until mid-October, the high count was 500 at Vergennes on 10/18 (JID,MCD), a juv. fed by an ad. in Washington on 9/13 (ATA) probably fledged sometime in August, and 1 was banded at BNP on 10/15 (VINS). The House Sparrow is still widespread and common.

BNP	Bragdon Nature Preserve, Woodstock		
DCWMA	Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area, Addison		
HC	Herrick's Cove, Rockingham		
MNWR	Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, Swanton		
SB	Sandbar Wildlife Management Area, Milton		
TWDR	Thurman W. Dix Reservoir, Orange		
WRD	Winooski River Delta, Colchester		
ad.	adult	mi.	mile
imm.	immature	Mt.	mountain
I.	Island	Pd.	Pond
juv.	juvenile	POH	per observer-hour
L.	Lake	Pt.	Point
max.	maximum		

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