



The last issue of the New Brunswick Naturalist (Vol. 1, No. 3) which should have been dated May 1970 contained three omissions, or rather, did not include the following: The first Common Teal sighting (p. 17) was March 29 and the Glaucous Gull (p. 18) was a sub-adult bird at Lanquoque May 24. Also, Bob Squires' amphibians (p. 19) were 2 Am. Toads near Canterbury May 3 and 2 Leopard Frogs at Lower Queensbury May 4.

Summer weather this year has been about average overall, though the latter part of May and early June were somewhat wet and cool. That weather retarded migration of the late arriving birds and also may have been responsible for some of the numerous small birds found dead during that period.

MAMMALS

Les Line, editor of Audubon magazine, visiting Machias Seal Island in the last half of June, reports that several small bats were seen there. With the amount of heavy fog experienced there, one wonders whether there would be enough flying insects to support bats, but there apparently is. Hibernation might take place in some recess of one of the heated buildings or perhaps they migrate to a natural hibernation area on the mainland.

A very good record of a Cougar or Panther is at hand. In Fundy National Park, four park naturalists, John MacFarlane, Blair Stevens, Bob McGrath and Bill McCarthy, saw one cross the Pt. Wolfe Road on June 8. Some tracks, but not very good ones, were visible in loose gravel at the side of the road and a plaster cast made. Through the years cougars have been reported almost annually in Fundy Park though some of the sightings have been made under poor conditions.

Whales are seen often, but seldom identified, in New Brunswick waters. Identification at sea usually requires an observer with a great amount of experience with whales.

On June 21, R.J. Rowe of Fredericton, fishing off Pt. Escuminac, saw a whale heading into Miramichi Bay. He estimated its length as thirty feet, and took two photographs as it jumped clear of the water. That must have been quite a sight! Henrik Deichmann brought in the photos from which it easily was identified as a Little Piked Whale, probably one of the most likely species to be seen in that area.

BIRDS: A new project may be unknown to many readers. The North American Breeding Bird Survey, a continent-wide survey system gives masses of statistically comparable data which should reveal increases and decreases of bird populations, particularly small land birds. This year over 1400 surveys were conducted in settled portions of North America, 23 of them in New Brunswick.

Each randomly located survey route has 50 sampling points half a mile apart. At each point, during a three-minute period, one observer records the birds seen and heard. The survey is conducted during good weather in June, starting a half hour before sunrise

(4:50 - 5:10 a.m. in N.B.). The B.B.S. has been conducted in the Maritimes since 1963. Anyone not a participant, but interested in receiving a 1970 report may obtain one from the Museum. Potential observers are invited to volunteer. A necessary qualification is the ability to identify most New Brunswick birds by their songs and calls.

Three American visitors, John M. Irvine Jr., Maurice Barnhill, and Marc Ribaud, saw an adult and immature Gannet off Machias Seal Island on June 29. Another was seen at Buctouche July 12 (Peter Pearce). Although it does not breed in the province such summer records are quite usual, particularly on the Gulf of St. Lawrence coast. Irvine, Barnhill and Ribaud also saw 5 Wilson's Petrels and a Sooty Shearwater on their June 29 trip and later, on July 11, Cecil Johnston saw a Greater Shearwater near Machias Seal. These pelagic birds, almost unknown to land bound birdwatchers, are most easily seen from a fishing boat in the waters south of Grand Menan or from the M.V. "Bluenose" crossing between Bar Harbour and Yarmouth.

The Great Cormorant is not known to nest in New Brunswick now but it is seen in summer. Peter Pearce saw a flock of about 400 at Neguac Beach on June 15. The next day, probably the same flock, was at Portage Island in Miramichi Bay. One, still with the white flanks of breeding plumage, was seen inland at Jemseg in early July (Kermode Parr).

Apologies to Stephen Homer for missing, in our last number, his Green Heron at Upper Woodstock on May 10. Most are seen further south, such as at Red Head Marsh, St. John County, where it is frequent. A remarkable five were there on June 26 (Jim Wilson). The last sighting reported of one of the Cattle Egrets in the McGowan Corner area was on June 7 (Mr. & Mrs. Eldon Fletcher). A Least Bittern, a shy species seldom reported, was seen at Red Head Marsh July 15 (David Christie, Chris Hajka & Jim Wilson).

Black-crowned Night Herons were not mentioned in the last issue but they are still with us. Alan Madden examined 10 nests May 14 and 29 on Horon Island, Restigouche County. Most contained 3 or 4 eggs each. The five seen by Father Jean-Paul Lebel on the Balmoral B.B.S. probably came from there, just as three seen on the Lac Baker B.B.S. (Christie & C. Hajka) probably came from the well-known colony at Edmundston. One, June 29 at Memramcook (Reid McIlenus) was perhaps a non-breeding bird, as that area is remote from all known colonies. In 1946 there was a colony on Long Island, Grand Menan, and no doubt it is still there, or nearby, for night herons are seen frequently at Castalia. Cecil Johnston saw one there July 10. An immature at Shippegan Gully July 30 (Nettie Moore) may have been from the Tracadie colony though, by that date, dispersal after nesting could have brought it from a long distance.

A Canada Goose was at Bathurst June 1 and 3 at nearby Bass River on June 12 (Pearce). Another lingering goose was a Brant at Bathurst on the 12th. Brant are extremely casual here in summer and never nest. At McAdam regular nesting of Canada Geese occurs, a wild population having been established from captive birds. Elsewhere there may be rare instances of nesting.

An out-of-season oddity was a female Ruddy Duck at the Saint John West sewage lagoon June 9 (Wilson & Johnston). This locality is a regular spot for the species in November. Non-breeding scoters may be seen in summer here and there along the coast. 20 White-wings were at Buctouche July 12 (Pearce).

Thanks to those of you who have reported Bald Eagle and Osprey sightings this summer. Next issue will include them. Two Pigeon Hawks were seen July 31 on the Old Shepody Road, Fundy National Park (Blair Stevens).

Jean E. Hoyt of Bloomfield, Kings Co., reports having seen flocks of Gray (Hungarian) Partridge this summer, "the first time in 5 or 6 years." These birds are generally very scarce now, having disappeared from some of the areas where they were once regular.

Three Common Gallinules have been reported: 1 at Lower Cape, Albert County May 16 (Doug Whitman), 1 at Red Head Marsh June 26 (Jean and Jim Wilson) and 1 at Memramcook Lake June 29 (McManus).

The most interesting shorebird news this summer concerns the Semipalmated Plover and the Upland Plover. For the Semipalm there was one recent record of breeding in the province (Castalia, 1967 - Kenneth Edwards Jr.) and all the old records were for Grand Manan. This year two pairs, seen at Waterside June 25 (Christie & C. Majka), exhibited the agitated behaviour characteristic of nesting shorebirds. On a repeat visit July 1 (Christie and Majkas), only one pair were present, and a partly feathered young was flushed from the grasses in a gravelly area. Not far to the west, at the mouth of the Upper Salmon River, in Fundy National Park, David Smith found a nest of this species on July 4. It contained 3 eggs and photographs were obtained of both the nest and an adult bird.

Henrik Deichmann discovered the Upland Plovers rather fortuitously, while driving, when one lit on a telephone pole beside the road at Salisbury June 21. Stopping, he located three of these birds in the pastures and old fields there, at the junction of Routes 2 and 112. In one field of sparse grasses and goldenrods, agitated behaviour suggestive of breeding was displayed by the birds. He had the same experience on June 23, as did several other observers July 3-6 and later. These birds were on the farm of Mrs. Edith Cochran, a retired school teacher, who supplied some interesting information. She did not know what they were, but had noticed them and heard their strange whistles each summer for at least the last five and possibly eight, years. In fall 1969 she saw seven at once behind her house. This suggests that Upland Plovers are breeding at Salisbury and next year observers will be out earlier to try and locate the first nesting record for New Brunswick.

An adult Thick-billed Murre, usually a winter species here, was seen by members of the Saint John Naturalists' Club on a trip to Manawagonish Island, Saint John, July 19.

Owls, little known because of their nocturnal habits, are always interesting to see. On March 22 Jim Wilson found a Great Horned Owl nest with 3 eggs at Hampton. That nest apparently was robbed as it was found empty April 6. In Saint John West 2 adults and a half downy, half-feathered young were seen May 28-29 (Johnston). A less common owl is the Long-eared but Reid McManus suspects there were two pairs nesting near Memramcook Lake this summer. He saw 2 adults and 4 young June 23 and he and Doug Whitman found an adult and five young on July 1. Wilson also reports one of the species at Hammond River June 20 and July 4.

Most observers agree that Whip-poor-wills are less common in New Brunswick today than they were 20 years ago but there are a number of areas where they are seen regularly. However, the only one reported this summer was heard at South Bay, Saint John on June 13 (Muriel Wheaton).

A Red-headed Woodpecker was seen on Machias Seal Island in June (Les Line). The Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was reported a few times while an interesting report of the rare Northern Three-toed comes from Fundy National Park, where a pair were constructing a nest at Marvon Lake, June 1 (Roger Roy).

The Western Kingbird normally is a rare vagrant to New Brunswick during the fall, but two were seen in June: on the 20th near St. George (Wilson, Johnston & D. Smith), on the 30th at Fredericton (Parr). Both Trill's and Least Flycatchers were scarcer than usual on the Breeding Bird Surveys. Cool weather may have retarded the beginning of their breeding season, particularly with the late arriving Trill's. B.B.S. totals in New Brunswick were: Trill's, 407 in 1969, 297 in 1970; Least, 175 in 1969, 125 in 1970.

No one checked the area near Woodstock, where Rough-winged Swallows were reported in 1969, but there were two reports, 1 near St. George on June 9 (Christie) and 1 at Greenwich Hill, Kings Co., about July 10 (Stan Gorham). Father Jean-Paul Lebel observed

a pair of Purple Martins in flight June 16 on the Balmoral B.B.S. in Restigouche County. There was no sign of a colony. This is our first report north of Chatham. Cliff Swallows often flourish on our new concrete bridges. Doug Whitman counted 134 nests on the bridge at Turtle Creek Dam on July 12.

B.B.S. figures suggest that Common Crow numbers are down. Possibly cool weather influenced this early nester. The 1970 total was 553, versus 762 last year. Red-breasted Nuthatches seem to be at the bottom of a cycle here with a B.B.S. total of only 17 for the whole province.

Hank Deichmann saw a House Wren on the Cloverdale (Carleton Co.) B.B.S. June 1 and W. Ray Salt heard one June 1 between Shediac and Richibucto; recently it has been very rare here. For the Long-billed Marsh Wren, Jim Wilson followed up his 1968 nest find by providing the second provincial nest record, this time at Red Head Marsh, where he heard one singing June 26 and found the nest with eggs and 2 adults on July 2. Young were in the nest on July 15. The area had several dummy nests which this species habitually builds as well as the one in which it finally nests.

Some Hockingbirds showed up in May, one was seen in Moncton by Mrs. L.A. MacFarlane (fide Whitman) and another was at Sevogle Airstrip May 30 (Stan Teeple). One was present in Saint John West in the first week of June (Ian & Diane Tronwith). Possibly the same one was there June 9 (Wilson). At least 2 were seen during June at Burnt Church, where they nested last year (Mr. & Mrs. Sevoy, fide Parr). Another pair were seen regularly through the summer at Barker's Point (J.D. Atkinson).

Brown Thrashers are continuing their summer presence. The pair at Saint John West were still present in June (Wilson). One was seen at Jacquet River May 30 and June 17 (Lobel). They nested again at Penniac, as Walter Wade saw a flying young bird there in July. A pair were on territory at Alma in July (Mrs. A.W. Bennett & Mary Majka). Another in May was one on the 20th at Cambridge (Enid Inch & Marian Belyea).

Three Gray-checked Thrushes were recorded June 20 on the Green River B.B.S. in northwestern New Brunswick (Denys Bourque), the only area of the province where they have been known in summer. However, Hank Deichmann provides records from a new area of the northern highlands. On June 10 he reported one at 2000 feet on Mount Sagamook and the next day 5 at 2400 feet on Mount Carleton. Wood Thrushes were reported mostly in the same areas where they were seen last year. A new locality is 25 miles southwest of Campbellton where Irvine, Barnhill & Ribaud heard one on June 26. This was not too surprising as they are now fairly common near St. Francois, Madawaska County. One was found dead on a road within 25 miles of Burnt Church on June 7 (Salt), another new locality.

Eight E. Bluebirds were reported in southwestern New Brunswick during June. However, in Albert County where there were hopeful signs of a comeback in 1965-7 there were no reports this summer. Two were seen at Tabusintac Hill on Route 8 June 30 (Pearce & Teeple) and one on the Paquetville B.B.S. June 13 (Hilaire Chiesson); these are our first records from that northeastern section of the province. Generally the species is very scarce in New Brunswick compared to twenty years ago.

The scarce and local Warbling Vireo was reported May 29 at Acadia Forestry Station by Nettie Moore. Another was singing near her home in Fredericton during June and July. Andy Dean saw a pair there during the last three weeks of June.

W. Ray Salt, co-author of The Birds of Alberta, visited New Brunswick in June. Among his observations was another Warbling Vireo, seen June 6 between Burnt Church and Shippegan. His observation of main interest to us is an Orange-crowned Warbler which

"came very close" at Burnt Church June 7. This species had never been reported in New Brunswick before despite the fact that it nests north of us in northeastern Quebec and southern Labrador. Apparently the birds migrate through areas further west, where the main range of the species lies. Up to 1948 there were three fall records in Maine, and to 1960 there were four records (fall and early winter) for Nova Scotia, so a spring record seems doubly interesting.

Blackpoll Warblers were recorded on three B.B.S. routes (Richibucto, Pennfield Ridge and Cloverdale) outside their normal breeding range (northern highlands & Grand Manan). They were late migrants, delayed by the weather, as all three surveys were run before June 10. They were very common at Jacquet River May 30 to June 8 (Lebel). The B.B.S. data suggests two warblers in higher numbers this year, the Myrtle with a total 95 vs. 54 in 1969 and the Mourning with 33 vs. 19 in 1969.

Two interesting reports from May received too late for the last number were 1 Yellow-headed Blackbird at Waterside May 10 (Mrs. Prince, *fide* Whitman) and a male Summer Tanager at Fredericton in May (Marguerite McNair). The notable wave of Scarlet Tanagers, noted in our last number, continued heavily till June 6, with some reports as late as the 14th.



Numbers of Evening Grosbeaks on 1970 BBS routes. Dots (•) indicate other reports of large flocks (200-plus).

1966. Another traffic fatality, also a male, at Jacquet River June 6 had been banded in Richmond, Va. on April 25, 1970 (Lebel).

A male Indigo Bunting was seen at Red Head June 8 (*fide* Christie). A much more unusual record is a male Lark Bunting that was singing at Indian Point, Grand Lake, July 3-4 (Andy Dean & Rae Brown). The bird could not be found on subsequent days. This species is very rare here and normally is found only in fall.

Despite the many reports of Rufous-sided Towhees in May, none were reported during the summer. Another species expected to nest here soon is the Field Sparrow. One of them was singing near New River Station, Charlotte County, from May 31 to June 14 (Wilson *et al.*).

In 1964, the Fox Sparrow was discovered to be fairly common, and obviously breeding, in the upper parts of the Green and Kedgwick River watersheds. This year there were 3 on the Green River (Bourque) and on on the Kedgwick River (Madden) B.B.S. routes, as well as one further east on the Balmoral B.B.S. (Lebel). Deichmann also reported one June 10 at 2000 feet elevation between Mount Carleton and Sagonook Mountain. There has

Evening Grosbeaks were reported in larger numbers this summer, 1396 on the Breeding Bird Surveys compared with 596 last year. Over half of the birds recorded on the Blackville route were this species (Pearce). The accompanying map gives the B.B.S. data and the location of some large flocks. The main concentration is still in central New Brunswick though they are increasing, with the spruce budworm, in the south. Every New Brunswicker knows of the Evening Grosbeak's fatal association with roads where, in gravel or salt-feeding areas, the birds are often killed by cars. One notable kill was examined near the South Branch of the Tomogonope River, 27 miles northwest of Newcastle, on June 21 (Christie & Mary Hajka). Along two miles of highway were 330 males and 17 females, some fresh, others dead perhaps a week and a half. One male had been banded by G.H. Parks near Boiestown on June 16,

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been so little observation in these highland areas that we do not know whether the species is spreading or whether recent observations are the discovery of it in areas it has long occupied.

REPTILES

A large Snapping Turtle was captured May 31 in Belleisle Creek at Springfield (fide Ken Clark). Its carapace (upper shell) was estimated to be 16" long, a good size for this species. Mrs. H.C. Morehouse saw a smaller one July 4 at McDougall Lake, Charlotte County.

A Painted Turtle found June 27 near Magaguadavic Lake by Bob Squires is a new locality for our records.

INSECTS

Chris Hajka, an enthusiastic lepidopterist, has supplied almost all our notes on insects. Aside from the Spruce Budworm the reports do not tell of unusual abundance or scarcity of any species.

The Monarch butterfly is very rare in New Brunswick. Reports in June probably represent migrants returning from wintering areas in the south. Single Monarchs were seen in Albert County, at Riverside June 20 (Hajkas & Christie) and at Hebron June 23 (C. Hajka). At St. Andrews Wills MacCoubrey saw two in June. Even this small number of reports is probably high for that time of year. Care should be taken when identifying Monarchs because another species, the Viceroy, is a mimic of it and is very similar in general appearance. Chris Hajka's first Viceroy this year was at Petitcodiac July 2.

One of the reasons that Monarchs are rare here is the general scarcity of milkwoods, the main food plant of their larvae. Another butterfly, the Baltimore, depends only on Turtlehead as a food plant. As a result it is a rather local species, usually occurring as small colonies in areas where there is a lot of Turtlehead. The first Baltimore was seen at Calodonic Mountain July 4, this year (C. Hajka).

Like birds, some butterflies are found mainly in certain areas of the province. The Saepiolus Blue is one known mainly from the northern half of the province. On June 21 two were seen at Escuminac (C. Hajka & Dr. H. Hajka) and one on the Nepisiquit River (Christie & Mary Hajka).

Spruce Budworm numbers have increased greatly in southern New Brunswick during the last four years and large numbers now are found in much of St. John, Kings and Albert Counties. A large flight of newly emerged moths caused some excitement when they congregated at brightly lit buildings and parking areas in the city of Saint John during July. Even so, the flights were not nearly as large as those formerly experienced in some northern New Brunswick towns, such as Dalhousie, during the peak of budworm numbers there.

FLORA

The sole interesting report on plant life comes from Andy Dean who picked a strange plant at Hinto on July 5. He has identified it as Hawk's-beard Crepis capillaris. The specimen, in the Museum herbarium, is apparently the first record for New Brunswick. It is a European plant somewhat resembling our Yellow Hawkwoods.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Canadian Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Society (9 Finchgate Ct. Willowdale, Ont.) would like to obtain members and correspondents from this area. The Society has free pamphlets available concerning the value of amphibians and reptiles. A bi-monthly Newsletter is distributed to members, who pay \$2.00 a year.