

# NEWS LETTER

OF THE

## THUNDER BAY

### FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

PORT ARTHUR - FORT WILLIAM



15th October, 1951  
Volume V, No. 5.

P. O. Box 416,  
Port Arthur, Ont.

Dear Fellow-Naturalists:

The first indication of fall migration was noted by Dr. Allin at Kenora on July 26 when there was a small movement of night hawks. These were probably northern birds as subsequently there appeared to be no decrease in the local population. Warblers were migrating at the Lakehead as early as August 2nd. Lesser Yellowlegs were noted at Port Arthur on August 19th, and on the same date a Solitary Sandpiper was seen on Ridgeway and later on South Norah Street, Fort William - surely an unlikely spot to see one of these waders. Flickers were migrating in O'Connor township on September 3rd. The next week Mrs. Addison noted a flock of Bluebirds in her yard in Port Arthur. A heavy migration of Cape May and Myrtle Warblers, Lapland Longspurs, and Vesper Sparrows occurred on September 15th. Large flocks of Robins were seen September 29th and October 8th. Members can find added interest in bird-watching by recording the last dates they observe our summer residents as well as when they first see our winter visitors.

Harrison Orians, on October 26, will tell of the influence of geological time "By Erie's Changing Shores" in this seasons next Audubon Screen Tour. "The Riddle of Migration" is a subject that would attract us without the additional attraction of Roger Tory Peterson who wrote the bird guide so many of us use. Mr. Peterson, who will speak in Fort William on November 30, has recently been associated with Alexander Klots in the production of a new Field Guide to the Butterflies.

Yours sincerely,  
A. E. Allin, President  
Keith Denis, Editor

#### FIELD NOTES

Apr. 25	Old Squaw, Fort William, A.E.A.	Aug. 3	Spruce Grouse, Terrace Bay, AEA&DEA
June 7	Hudsonian Curlew(5), P.A. K.Eoll	19	Lesser Yellowlegs, P.A. A.E.A.
10	Alder Flycatcher L.S.D. & A.E.A.	19	Solitary Sandpiper, F.W. A.E.A.
	Mourning Warbler L.S.D.	28	Whippoorwill, Round Lake C.E.G.
13	Bald Eagle, Whitefish L. K.C.	Sept. 2	Least Sandpipers, P.A. G.E.G.
14	Bonaparte Gull, P.A. A.E.A.	3	Slate-coloured Junco, P.A. K.D.
15	Hudsonian Chickadee, P.A., C.E.G.	6	Bluebirds in flock, P.A., Mrs. Addison
25	Turkey Vulture, Whitefish L., K.C.	8	Pigeon Hawks numerous, Schreiber to F.W. (one caught small bird) L.S.D.
	Osprey, Whitefish L. K.C.	15	Vesper Sparrows, P.A., G.E.G.; K.D.
17	Brown Thrasher, Stanley, LSD&CEG		Cape May Warblers
18	Short-eared Owl, Paipoonge, A.E.A.		Lapland Longspurs
	Virginia Rail, Whitefish L., K.C.		Myrtle Warblers
20	Calypso bulbosa in bloom, Loon L.		Marsh Hawk (female) C.E.G.
25	Stemless Ladyalipper (Gyrripedium acaule) in bloom, McKenzie R.		Broad-winged Hawk
July 5	Bracted Rein Orchid, Rosslyn		Hudsonian Curlew
8	Catbird L.S.D.		Black-bellied Plover
10	Striped Coralroot, Ravine L. K.C.		White-throated Sparrow singing, A.E.A.



BREEDING RECORDS - 1951

Common Loon	July 10	1 young & 2 adults	Lake Rita, Sibley Park, K.C.
Holboell's Grebe	June 16	2 nests: 4 eggs each,	Whitefish L. K.C.
	" 18	6 nests: 2-5 eggs ea,	Whitefish L. K.C.
Double-crested Cormorant	May 16	nesting	Black Bay; C. Armstrong
American Bittern	July 13	one immature	Whitefish L. K.C.
Mallard Duck	July 8	6 young	Whitefish L. L.S. Dear
Black Duck	May 11	nest, 11 eggs	Paipoonge Twp. K.C.
	June 19	6 young	Sibley Park K.C.
	July 8	8 young	Nolala, Lybster Twp.; Allins
	" 23	5 young	Round L., Hardwick Twp.; C.E.G.
Wintail	June 19	9 young	Sibley Park K.C.
Ring-necked Duck	July 8	7 young & adult	Round L., Hardwick Twp. C.E.G.
	" 13	6 young & female	Hardwick Twp. K.C.
Common Golden-eye	June 21	11 young	Mud L., Oliver Twp. K.C.
	" 22	8 young	Whitefish L. K.C.
Common Merganser	June 17	9 eggs (nest deserted)	Powderhouse I., Sibley K.C.
	" 17	11 eggs (incubating)	Silver I., Sibley K.C.
Red-breasted Merganser	Aug. 5	4 young ( $\frac{1}{2}$ grown)	Rosspport A. E. A.
		11 young (very small)	Rosspport A. E. A.
Red-tailed Hawk	May 20	nest 40' up Balm of Gilead;	O'Connor Twp.; AEA & LSD
Osprey	July	young	Silver I. Mrs. Addison
	" 20	young	Wasp L. C.E.G.
Peregrine Falcon	June 19	1 downy young	Shangonia I. K.C.
Spruce Grouse	July 13	6 young & female	Round L. K.C. & CEG
	Aug. 3	4 young	Terrace Bay A.E.A. & D.E.A.
Ruffed Grouse	Apr. 29	Drumming heard	Paipoonge Twp. C.E.G. & K.C.
	June 4	8 young & female	Dorion Twp. E. Taylor
	" 4	11 young & female	McGregor Twp. V. Armitage
	" 30	young	Silver Island Mr. & Mrs. J. Dyke
July 8	young	Whitefish L. L.S.D.	
Hungarian Partridge	Aug. 3	14 young, 2 adults	Fort William A. E. Otway
Killdeer	July 20	4 young	Round L. C.E.G.
American Woodcock	Apr. 16	Flighting-1, possibly 2;	Elind Creek, McGregor Twp. AEA
Spotted Sandpiper	June 17	2 young running	Powderhouse I., Sibley K.C.
	July 20	2 young	Round L. C.E.G.
Herring Gull	May 16	eggs in nests	Black Bay C. Armstrong
	June 17	Eggs fresh to pipped;	Shangonia I. K.C.
	Aug. 4	downy young to young with primaries,	Shangonia I., KC
		young	Rosspport A.E.A. & L.S.D.
Rock Dove	March 5	mating	Fort William A.E.A.
	Sept. 15	2 eggs (well-developed)	Fort Arthur N. Denis
Great Horned Owl	Apr. 10	Female on nest	Nirigon Anton Swanson
	May 23	2 young, one-third grown, nest 25' up black spruce, beneath nest head of Herring Gull, hind feet of Varying Hare, head of muskrat, many pellets, and miscellaneous remains. Amethyst	A.E.A.



Belted Kingfisher	May 6	excavating hole in sandbank, Paipoonge Twp.	K.D.
Yellow-shafted Flicker	June 4	nest in stub	Shebandowan L. Dr. Quackenbush
	July 7	nest in pole	McGregor Twp. Norman Denis
	* May 11	nest in fence post	McIntyre Twp. K.C.
	" 11	nest in aspen	Paipoonge Twp. K.C.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	May 20	excavating 50' up in dead stub, O'Connor Twp., L.S.D.	
Hairy Woodpecker	July	young in Balm of Gilead, Round L.	C.E.G.
Downy Woodpecker	June 15	4 eggs, nest in dead poplar, 5' from ground, Cypress River	A.E.A.
Eastern Kingbird	Aug. 11	2 young out of nest	Neebing Twp. A.E.A.
Eastern Phoebe	May 6	nest in building behind church, Paipoonge Twp.	K.D.
	" 20	nest fastened only to a section of wallpaper hanging partially detached from wall of the shack 5 eggs	O'Connor Twp. D.E.A. & A.E.A.
Tree Swallow	May 20	nest in tree hole	O'Connor Twp. A.E.A. & L.S.D.
	July 10	Adult feeding young in nesting box, Fort William	J. Thompson
	July 13	Young flying	Round L. K.G. & C.E.G.
	" 23	young barely able to fly pulling alsike clover, Round L.	C.E.G.
Barn Swallow	June 17	4 eggs, nest in mine shaft, Silver I.	K.G.
	July 10	1 egg in nest under bridge (apparently an old Phoebe nest)	Oliver Twp. Allins
	July 10	4 young out of nest	Paipoonge Twp., Dorothy Allin
	" 13	young flying	Round L. K.G. & C.E.G.
Cliff Swallow	May 20	large colony at barn where late Mr. Jacobs reported them nesting many years ago.	L.S.D.
	July 10	young flying	Pass L., McTavish Twp. K.C.
Canada Jay	Apr. 20	3 young, nest in black spruce, Long Lac,	
	June 15	young & adults	East of Nipigon L.S.D.
Crow	Apr. 29	on nest	Fort William L.S.D.
	May 19	3 eggs	Fort William D.E.A.
	July 8	young out of nest	O'Connor Twp. Allins
Black-capped Chickadee	May 6	adults in & out of nesting holes, Paipoonge Twp.	K.D.
Red-breasted Nuthatch	May 6	adult returning to nesting hole with food	Paipoonge Twp. K.D.
House Wren	June 26	4 young leave nest	Port Arthur N. Denis
Robin	Apr. 16	Adults carrying nesting material, Port Arthur	K.D.
	May 5	4 eggs, nest in jackpines, Neebing Twp.	K.D.
	" 19	young	Fort William David Allin
	" 20	2 eggs, nest in hollow top of dead stub 7' from ground, O'Connor Twp.	A.E.A.
	June 22	3 eggs, nest 3' from ground in willow, Neebing Twp., AEA	
	June 24	2 young, nest under bridge, Pays Plat	C. Armstrong & KD
	July 10	1 young in nest	Oliver Twp. A.E.A.
	" 10	1 egg	Oliver Twp. A.E.A.
Cedar Waxwing	May 20	building nest in White Birch at 40' from ground. Nearly complete by May 24th but later blown down or abandoned. (N.B.-Bent gives June 2 as earliest egg date in New York state and Baillie and Harrington's earliest record is June 14th, 1905).	Fort William A.E.A.
	June 22	Female on nest in lilac 8' from ground. Two males in her company. Nest later abandoned. Port Arthur, K.D.	
	June 25	nest being built in lilac, Fort William	A.E.A.
	June 26	5 eggs	Port Arthur Addison's
	July 10	1 young in nest	Oliver Twp. A.E.A.



Breeding Records-1951 continued

Common Starling	May 11	Nest in fence post	Faipoonge Twp.	K.C.
	" 23	young out of nest	Fort William	A.E.A.
	" 27	young in nest	Fort William	A.E.A.
American Redstart	Aug. 7	2 young & adult	Attic L.	C.E.G.
English Sparrow	March 5	carrying nesting material,	Fort William	E.A.
	" 18	carrying nesting material,	Kakabeka Falls	Mr. Edger
	June 28	1 young out of nest	Fort William	A.E.A.
Brewer's Blackbird	June 13	2 nests(100' apart), 4 and 5 half grown young respectively, This colony appeared reduced to 2 females and 1 male.	Fort Arthur	A.E.A.
Bronzed Grackle	June 30	young out of nest	Fort William	A.E.A.
Vesper Sparrow	June 17	young flying	Sibley	K.C.
Chipping Sparrow	June 30	2 eggs	Fort William	A.E.A.
Part 2 KENORA DISTRICT by A. E. Allin				
Purple Martin	July 16	young		
Sparrow Hawk	July 16	young		
Great Horned Owl	July 19	1 young		
Part 3 Quetico Park, RAINY RIVER DISTRICT by Keith Denis				
Common Loon	Aug. 13	young	Basswood L.	
Bald Eagle	Aug. 13	2 immature	Crooked L.	
Mallard Duck	Aug. 13	5 young	Crooked L.	
Black Duck	Aug. 14	4 young & female	Robinson R.	
Osprey	Aug. 14	adult birds on nest	Robinson R. (nest 50' in stub)	
Great Blue Heron	Aug. 14	immature & adult	Robinson R.	
Myrtle Warbler	Aug. 16	immature birds	Kahshahpiwi L.	
Ruffed Grouse	Aug. 17	3 well-grown young & female,	Basswood L.	

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\* Additional notes on breeding birds:

Bald Eagle: Aug. 3. Gerow brothers showed Dr. Allin an empty nest on an island off Pays Plat that had been occupied in 1950.

May 16. Fishermen on Black Bay told Chris Armstrong that Bald Eagles nest regularly on Brent island and at Sheeshaeb Bay.

Red-eyed Vireo: Mr. J. R. Lawrence found an empty nest in a deciduous tree at Crystal Beach the third week in July.

Ruffed Grouse were thought to be at their peak or locally on the decline in 1950. However they are unusually abundant this season. Considered uncommon in Minnesota last fall Dr. Allin saw many adults on a trip from Fort William through Duluth to Kenora and return between April 25th and 29th this spring. At least 10 were dead on the road, killed by passing cars. Numerous young have been noted locally all summer and by early September they were very common along our woodland roads.

Yellow Rail were reported heard by Dr. Axtell of the Buffalo Museum of Natural Sciences on July 8, 1950, in a marsh 15 miles south of Fort William.

Ravens have been increasing in recent years, a fact attributed in part at least to the decreased use of poison bait for wolves. They were fairly common in the Upsala-Ignace region on August 27 and 28th. Along the highways they were acting as scavengers, feeding on the animals and insects killed by passing cars.



## BOOK REVIEWS

ONTARIO BIRDS by L.L. Snyder. Published by Clarke Irwin & Co. Ltd., Toronto, 1951; 248 pp., illustrated. Price \$4.50.

Ontario Birds, by L.L. Snyder, Associate Director and Curator of Ornithology of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, is profusely illustrated with black and white drawings by the outstanding Canadian bird artist, T. M. Shortt, Chief of the Division of Art and Exhibits of the same museum. Following a general discussion of birds, their classification, and migration, the remainder of the volume deals with the natural history of those species occurring in Ontario. End maps show the areas discussed. A calendar of spring arrivals includes migration dates from the Lakehead based on observations originally made by members of our club. This is the first book dealing with Ontario birds published since 1894 and should be in the library of every bird lover.

A. E. Allin

AUDUBON WATER BIRD GUIDE by Richard H. Pough. Published by Doubleday & Co., New York, 1951. 352 pp., illustrated. Price \$3.50. This companion volume to Audubon Bird Guide—Eastern Land Birds, covers 258 species of water and shore birds as well as birds of prey. It discusses their identification, habits and range. There are 138 black and white drawings by Earl L. Poole and 458 illustrations in colour by Don Eckalberry. This book, small enough to carry in one's pocket, is highly recommended for those interested in these groups of birds.

A. E. Allin.

GROWING WOODLAND PLANTS by Clarence and Eleanor G. Birdseye. Published by Oxford University Press, New York, 1951. 223pp. illustrated. Price \$4.50. This interesting pocket-sized book tells how to grow woodland plants in your own yard. It discusses the required Ph of the soil for each of many plants, how to collect and propagate both ferns and flowering plants, how to make suitable acid compost, and other culture requirements. A valuable handbook for those who would like a wildflower garden.

K. Denis.

NATURE'S WAYS by Roy Chapman Andrews. Crown Publishers, New York, 1951. 206 pp., illustrated. Price \$4.75. This production of the Creative Bookmaking Guild, Inc., is on excellent paper and is well illustrated by Andre Durandean and others. The colour plates were originally used by Travellers Insurance Co. in advertisements in the National Geographic Magazine. The articles on the ways in which nature's creatures have equipped themselves for survival are interesting. The book is well indexed.

K. Denis.

## NOTE BOOK

A Snapping Turtle was taken at Owakonze, 100 miles west of the Lakehead, on June 16, 1951, according to Col. Dear. Two snapping turtles were reported seen at Round Lake by Claude Garton between July 20 and August 30th. One was 18 inches across, the other ten inches. Bell's turtles were seen at Castle lake.

A Raccoon was reported seen at Amytheat by Dr. E. N. Wright on July 11, 1951. During June one was fed by Gordon Louis near the old sheep ranch in Port Arthur.

Rock Bass may be increasing locally. A large number were taken by children fishing the lower stretches of the Neebing River this summer.

The Small-mouthed Black Bass approaches the northern limit of its range locally and has never been a popular fish locally although it has occurred for years in certain lakes, e.g. Loon, Deception, Silver, Circle, Cook's and Bass. A few years ago it was successfully introduced into Kashabowie and Shebandowan lakes. This past summer there have been reports of successful catches from the Black Sturgeon area. Unfortunately its introduction is not being confined to lakes recommended by the biologists of the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests and plantings have been made in trout waters where it fails to thrive itself and where it is probably injuring the trout fishing.

More Lake Trout are being taken marked by the Sea Lamprey. One of the latter was taken at Rosport the first week of August by Gerow Bros. The same fishermen found another attached to a Lake Trout on August 15. This specimen is now in Dr. Allin's collection due to the cooperation of William Jacobson of Westfort. Another taken by Jerry Skee at Birch Beach July 31st attached to a three pound Lake Trout is in the same collection.