

## BIRDING VERMONT'S NORTHEAST KINGDOM: AN OVERVIEW

by Walter G. Ellison

Illustrations by Nancy L. Martin

*Editor's Note.* The late George Aiken, a United States Senator from Vermont, coined the term, *Northeast Kingdom*, in a Rotary Club speech in Lyndonville, Vermont, in 1949. Aiken felt that the name captured the beauty and wildness of the northeastern corner of the state.

Birders look northward to seek out the resident and migratory birds of the coniferous forests that stretch across North America from Newfoundland to Alaska. The Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, comprising Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties, is at the southern edge of this biome and harbors many of its characteristic birds. This region also hosts an abundance of birds of northern hardwood forest and has some first-rate wetlands. This article cannot be a detailed guide to the Northeast Kingdom; instead, I outline some of the birding highlights of the region.

To reduce unnecessary repetition, I include lists of characteristic birds of the major habitats of the Northeast Kingdom. Some redundancy between lists has been unavoidable due to broad habitat use by some birds; for instance, Winter Wren appears on most lists. Readers will note the absence of some familiar birds; I did not list some species to avoid needlessly lengthening the lists with common birds such as American Robin. In other instances the birds are scarce, near the northern edge of their ranges, e.g., House Wren, Brown Thrasher, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Field Sparrow.

I focus this account on birding during late spring and early summer, when most birders might plan to visit the Northeast Kingdom. This focus is not intended to discourage birding at other seasons. This is a good area to hunt for such winter specialties as Northern Shrike and Snow Bunting, and may be one of the few readily accessible places to find winter finches in some years. The Northeast Kingdom may also be amazingly birdless in winter when cone crops fail. The 1975 Island Pond Christmas Bird Count featured several parties with day lists of five or fewer species and less than 200 individual birds. That's tough birding. Spring and fall migrations are good here, and interesting waterbirds occur on the many lakes and ponds, especially during fallouts induced by major cold fronts. When it is appropriate, I will refer to birding in other seasons in the following accounts. Besides birds, it is also possible to see moose (increasing), bear, coyote, fisher, and bobcat.

The climate of the Northeast Kingdom is cold temperate with an emphasis on cold. Winter temperatures regularly fall far below zero Fahrenheit, and morning temperatures in summer sometimes dip into the forties. Birders should bring several layers of clothing that can be shed as the day warms up. Raingear

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## Characteristic Birds of Major Habitats of the Northeast Kingdom

### Northern Hardwood Forest

Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Broad-winged Hawk  
Ruffed Grouse  
Barred Owl  
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Least Flycatcher  
Common Raven  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Winter Wren  
Veery  
Hermit Thrush  
Wood Thrush  
Solitary Vireo  
Red-eyed Vireo  
Black-throated Blue Warbler  
Black-throated Green Warbler  
Blackburnian Warbler  
Black-and-white Warbler  
American Redstart  
Ovenbird  
Canada Warbler (wet areas)  
Scarlet Tanager  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Dark-eyed Junco

### Lower-Elevation Coniferous Forest

Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Northern Goshawk  
Ruffed Grouse  
Northern Saw-whet Owl  
Black-backed Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  
Gray Jay (local—see text)  
Common Raven  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Winter Wren  
Golden-crowned Kinglet  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet

### Lower-Elevation Conifer Forest (continued)

Swainson's Thrush  
Hermit Thrush  
Solitary Vireo  
Nashville Warbler  
Northern Parula (wet areas)  
Magnolia Warbler  
Cape May Warbler (uncommon)  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Blackburnian Warbler  
Bay-breasted Warbler (uncommon)  
Canada Warbler (swamps)  
White-throated Sparrow  
Dark-eyed Junco  
Purple Finch  
Pine Siskin  
Evening Grosbeak

### Open, Wet, and Brushy Habitats

American Woodcock  
Common Snipe  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Olive-sided Flycatcher  
Alder Flycatcher  
Winter Wren (clear-cuts)  
Eastern Bluebird  
Veery  
Nashville Warbler  
Tennessee Warbler (rare)  
Chestnut-sided Warbler  
American Redstart  
Mourning Warbler (clear-cuts)  
Canada Warbler  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Indigo Bunting  
Lincoln's Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
White-throated Sparrow

### Upper Elevation Species

Gray-cheeked (Bicknell's) Thrush  
Blackpoll Warbler (a few north  
of Route 105 on logging roads)

and waterproof footwear are also advisable. Late May and June are peak bug season in the north country. Anyone who has braved clouds of biting insects, particularly black flies, will attest to the annoyance these critters cause. Bring along good repellent, but do not let the bugs deter you. There are two blessings to birding the north: little poison ivy and no ticks. As you drive about, remember that a moose through the windshield can be lethal. Drive slowly, and be alert for reddish eyes hovering seven feet above the road at night.

Always bring along good topographic maps and a compass if you plan to do any off-trail hiking, since roads are few and far between in the north. This is paper company territory, and logging trucks have the right-of-way on Champion International's timber roads. Try to have at least two wheels off logging roads when you park, listen for the oncoming behemoths, and give way when confronted by a truck, especially a fully loaded one. Not all logging roads will have open gates, so be prepared to change your plans if you find a gated and locked road. Most logging roads will be gated from April to Memorial Day to avoid mud-season damage, but after Memorial Day major logging roads are usually open.

Accommodations are readily found around the major population centers. I list phone numbers at the end of the article for local chambers of commerce. Island Pond has a good motel, The Lakefront, which is comfortable and reasonably priced. Brighton and Maidstone state parks offer camping, and there are several private campgrounds in the region. Useful resources include the DeLorme *Vermont Atlas and Gazetteer*, an excellent road atlas for all but logging roads. Current seven-and-a-half-minute U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps provide the best information on extant logging roads. Athletic birders should also invest in the Green Mountain Club's *The Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont*.

The small city of St. Johnsbury is the southern port of entry into the true Northeast Kingdom. There is a fine old Victorian natural history museum on Main Street in town, the Fairbanks Museum (802-748-2372), which is worth a visit if you have time.

### Victory Bog

Victory Bog is much more than a bog. It is a 5000-acre wildlife management area embracing bog, alder swamp, beaver ponds, northern hardwood forest, and large tracts of balsam fir, black spruce, and white cedar. To reach Victory Bog, take U.S. Route 2 east from St. Johnsbury, and continue eastward for 10.5 miles through the villages of East St. Johnsbury and Concord. At the small village of North Concord, turn left (north), and proceed three miles to Victory (don't blink), where you must take the right (east) fork in the road, which continues up the Moose River valley. At about 4.7 miles there is a gravel parking lot above the road grade that marks the southern boundary of the

Victory Wildlife Management Area. There is good birding here, particularly along the Moose River on the east side of the road. State-owned land extends north almost to the village of Gallup Mills four miles to the north.

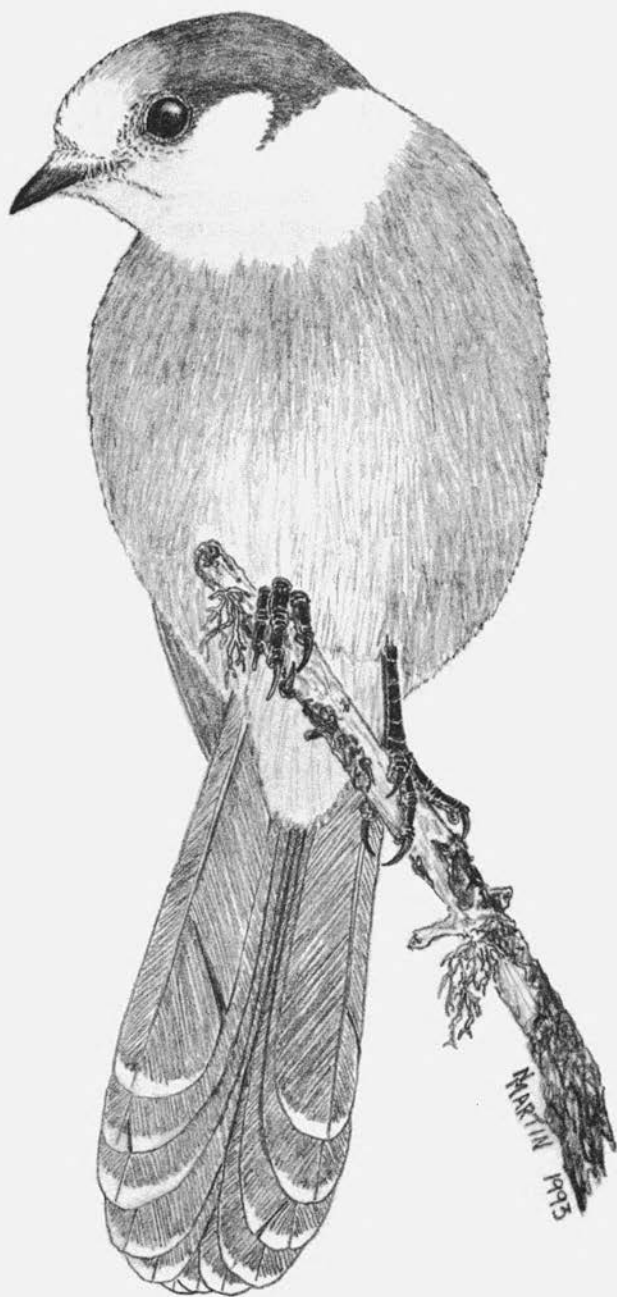
Continue to the Bog Brook crossing parking lot about 5.3 miles north of Route 2. There is a sweeping view of the Bog Brook drainage here with alder and willow swales in the foreground and conifers on the fringes. The best way to bird this area is by canoe or on foot. Bog Brook and Moose River provide waterways for exploration, and old logging roads and more recent skidder trails may be explored. You should also explore the natural gas pipeline right-of-way three miles north of Bog Brook, a consistently good area to search for Gray Jays. Besides Gray Jays, birders may also seek American Bittern, Northern Harrier, Northern Goshawk, Virginia Rail, Common Snipe, American Woodcock, Black-backed Woodpecker, Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied, and Alder flycatchers, Common Raven, Boreal Chickadee, both kinglets, eighteen nesting species of wood warblers, including occasional Bay-breasted and Cape May warblers, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Evening Grosbeak. A map and compass are very useful for covering more than the fringes of this vast area. If you see Gray Jays here or at Moose Bog (see below), check for color bands placed on them by Dr. William Barnard, and let him know the date and location of your sightings (Department of Biology, Norwich University, Northfield, VT 05663).

### **Burke Mountain**

The easiest access in northeastern Vermont to subalpine forest above 3000 feet elevation is via the toll road to the summit of Burke Mountain (3267 feet). To reach Burke Mountain, go to Lyndonville on Interstate 91, then go through town on U.S. Route 5, and turn right (east) onto Route 114 at the north end of town. Proceed north on Route 114 for five miles to the village of East Burke. At the north edge of town Route 114 makes a sharp left turn; take the major right (east) turn here toward Burke Mountain. The turn is hard to miss because of large signs for the Burke Mountain Ski Area. Continue east on this road for 2.5 miles to the base of the toll road. The toll road is open from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. The woods on the lower slopes have good numbers of the regular northern hardwood forest birds. The summit has a good population of Blackpoll Warblers and two to five pairs of Gray-cheeked Thrushes. If you do not wish to pay the toll or confine yourself to the open hours for the road, which are not peak hours for Gray-cheeked Thrush activity, you may walk up the toll road free of charge or take two other hiking trails up the mountain (see *The Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont*).

### **Lake Willoughby**

Lake Willoughby is a 500-foot-deep blue jewel set amid spectacular granite mountains with soaring cliffs. The main avian attraction here is a pair of



*Gray Jay*

*Illustration by Nancy L. Martin*

Peregrine Falcons nesting on the cliffs of Mount Pisgah. There are also rare alpine plants on the calcium-rich granite cliffs such as butterwort, white mountain saxifrage, and alpine woodsia. Several pairs of Common Ravens sport over the cliffs of Mount Pisgah, Mount Hor, Haystack Mountain, and Wheeler Mountain. Lake Willoughby is reached by taking U.S. Route 5 north from Lyndonville for eight miles. Turn right onto Route 5A at the village of West Burke. The lake lies another 6.5 miles to the north.

A hiking trail to the summit of Mount Pisgah begins at a trailhead 0.7 miles south of the lake (5.8 miles north of West Burke) on the east (right) side of Route 5A. Another trail ascends Mount Pisgah from the north, starting from Route 5A three miles north of the southern trailhead (3 miles south of the intersection of Routes 5A and 16). These are good trails for northern hardwood forest birds and such boreal species as Swainson's Thrush. There are Blackpoll Warblers at the summit. Access to the cliff top is restricted during the Peregrine Falcon nesting season from April to July, but one usually can see their comings and goings from below the cliffs along the lake. Migrating hawks ride the updrafts along the Pisgah cliffs during autumn migration, often offering spectacular views. Lake Willoughby itself has surprisingly little waterbird activity, perhaps because of its great depth.

Other good areas to bird around Lake Willoughby include the Mount Hor trail on the west side of the lake, reached by a rough CCC road that leaves Route 5A just south of the southern Mount Pisgah trailhead. The CCC road, if driven carefully, can be productive for Mourning Warbler in regenerating logging scars, and for Rusty Blackbird and Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Dolloff Ponds at the far end of it. Wheeler Mountain offers spectacular views and Blackpoll Warblers on its summit, and Wheeler Pond has nesting Rusty Blackbirds. A relatively easy hiking trail from Long Pond east of Lake Willoughby ascends Bald Mountain (3315 feet), whose summit harbors Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Blackpoll Warbler.

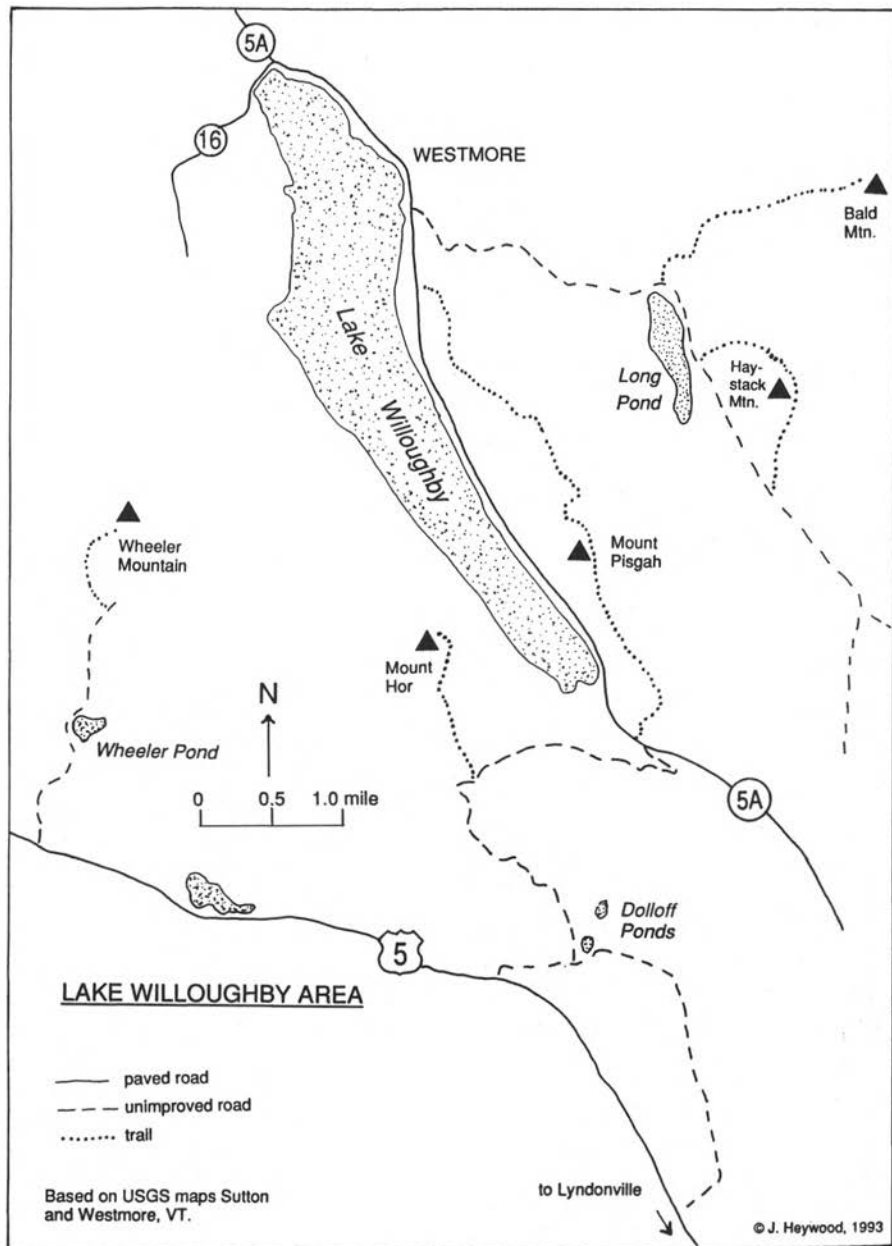
### Island Pond

The forests around the village of Island Pond, especially those to the east along Route 105, are the best known and most consistently productive areas for boreal birds in the Northeast Kingdom. Island Pond is twenty-four miles northeast of Lyndonville via Route 114. The town shows its heritage as a railroad town in timber country, but it has a wonderful setting amid round-shouldered mountains on the shores of its namesake pond. Although most of the good birding lies to the east of town, Island Pond and nearby Spectacle Pond are worth a check during migration and for summering Common Loons. Waterbirds on Island Pond have included Red-throated Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Great Cormorant, Brant, all three scoters, Oldsquaw, and Bonaparte's Gull. Brighton State Park on the east side of the pond offers camping and a swimming beach.



While you are in town, keep an eye open for Cliff Swallows flying over the pond and nesting under the eaves of downtown buildings.

Proceed east of town on Route 105. At 3.5 miles is the John H. Boylan Airport, a small airfield that nonetheless offers an oasis of grassland amid the wetlands and forests of Essex County. There are extensive alder swamps





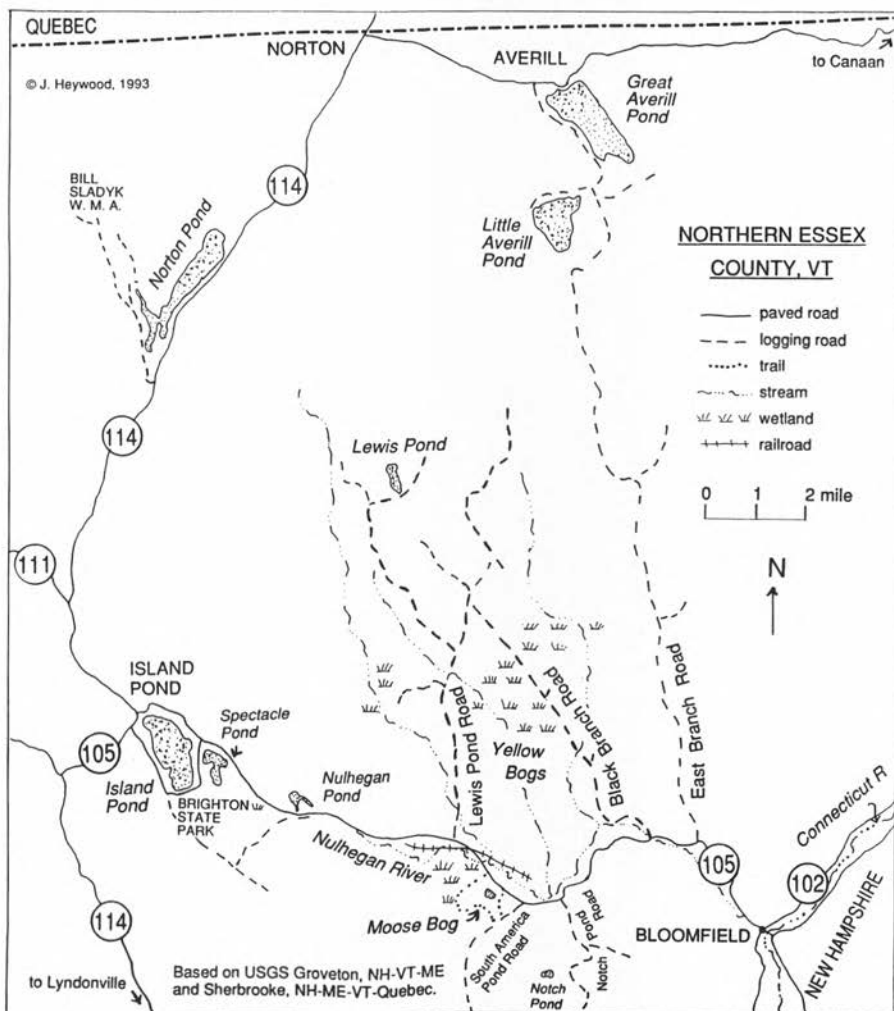
surrounding the airport around Nulhegan Pond and the Nulhegan River. Common Snipe and American Woodcock abound here. The early morning sparrow chorus includes Field, Vesper, Savannah, Lincoln's, and Swamp sparrows. The alder swamps shelter American Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier, and Alder Flycatcher. The environs of the airport is also one of the few local places where Brown Thrasher regularly occurs.

As you motor eastward, you enter the Nulhegan Basin proper, an area dominated by coniferous forest. The lower elevations of the basin are affected by radiative cooling and thus have lower temperatures than the surrounding hills. When you climb out of the basin on logging roads, the frequency of northern hardwood forest increases. After about 6.5 miles from town you cross the Canadian National Railroad at a large old log landing called Wenlock Crossing. On the left is a logging road called the Lewis Pond Road, which penetrates deep into the unincorporated town of Lewis. Habitat conditions on logging roads are unpredictable because forests along them are subject to harvest. Nonetheless, there are still large tracts of wet coniferous and hardwood forest along them. Clear-cuts offer some interesting birding as they regenerate, providing habitat for American Kestrel, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, occasional nesting Tennessee Warblers, Mourning Warbler, and Lincoln's Sparrow. Conifer stands may have Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. Rusty Blackbirds also nest along logging roads, usually near alder swamps. Lewis Pond, reached after ten miles right in two places where a road branches to the left, is an attractive pond, which resounds with the hollow calls of mink frogs in June. Follow the map closely here, for you do not want to take one road (possibly overgrown) that turns off to the right.

A quarter-mile east of Wenlock Crossing on Route 105 is a bridge over the Nulhegan River, just beyond which is a large gravel lot on the left across from the sign marking the 2000-acre Wenlock Wildlife Management Area. On the right, shortly after the sign, is a wood road providing access to the west side of the area, which includes alder swamp along the Nulhegan and coniferous forest along the outlet of Moose Bog Pond. This area includes some grouse dust-bathing sites (hope for Spruce Grouse) and birds similar to those at Moose Bog itself. To reach Moose Bog, continue eastward for a mile, and turn south onto a major gated logging road, the South America Pond Road. The gate is likely to be closed prior to Memorial Day. A quarter-mile south of Route 105 the road dips into an alder swamp with drowned cedars. Park off the road here or at a pullout on the west side of the road closer to Route 105. Bird the cedars, walk back north to the crest of the hill, and take an obscure logging road blocked by granite boulders on the left (west). This narrow track through the black spruces leads to a low ridge above Moose Bog Pond. There are several faint trails downhill to the margin of this boggy pond which sometimes lives up to its

name. In early June its shores are aflame with rhodora. All boreal specialties, including on rare occasion Spruce Grouse, may be seen here. Nashville and Magnolia warblers are very common around Moose Bog, giving birders ample opportunity to learn their songs and calls.

From here continue walking west and north on the Moose Bog trail to Route 105, and then eastward along 105 to South America Pond Road and your car. Cape May Warblers are frequently seen and heard in the tall conifers along Route 105. Logging roads on the north side of Route 105 give access to the Nulhegan River and are also worth exploring. The South America Pond Road is a long logging road that proceeds south over the divide separating the Nulhegan and Paul Stream drainages and continues down the Paul Stream valley passing the vast Ferdinand Bog and eventually depositing the traveler on the road to





*Cape May Warbler*

*Illustration by Nancy L. Martin*

Maidstone State Park. It covers some superb boreal habitat and hardwood forest and is well worth spending the better part of a day birding.

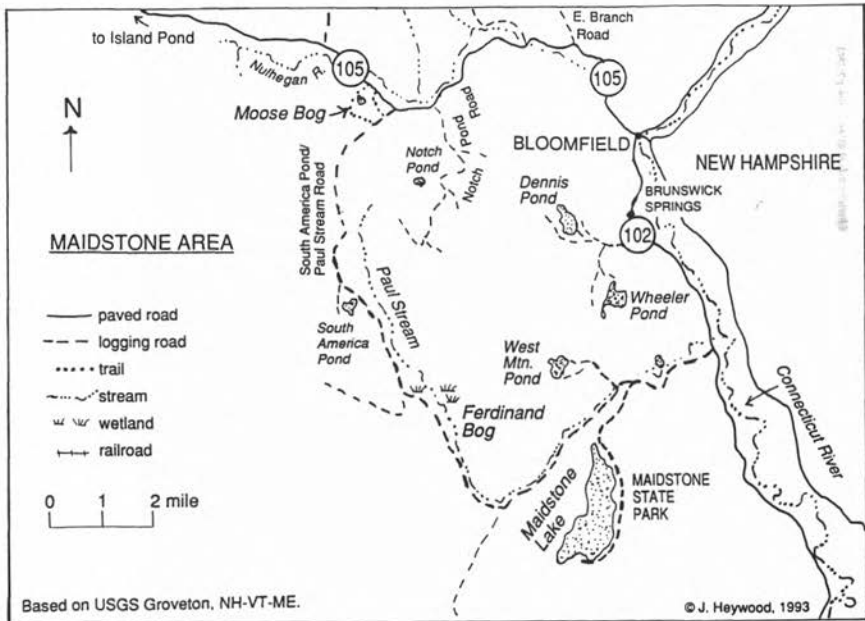
Three other very good logging roads leave Route 105 east of Moose Bog. The first is the Notch Pond Road, which is a south (right) turn off Route 105 a half-mile east of South America Pond Road. The soupy mud along the north side of Route 105 near this turn is a moose wallow. Moose are often seen here at dawn and dusk (you may also see the cars of local moose watchers). The early stages of the Notch Pond Road have hardwoods on the left and conifers on the right, providing an interesting mix of bird species, e.g., Scarlet Tanager and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Northern Parula is especially common here.

Proceeding another three miles east on Route 105, you cross the railroad and the Nulhegan River again; here the huge standards of the Hydro Quebec powerline break the horizon. Hard on the left (north) is the Black Branch ("three-toed") Road. After traversing a mix of clear-cuts, alder swamps, and conifer patches along this road, the birder enters an impressive tract of wet black-spruce forest called the Yellow Bogs. At four miles there is a branch in the road. This area has recently been a consistent place to find Spruce Grouse, with a good chance of finding Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. Three-toed Woodpecker has been seen here in winter. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department has color-banded Spruce Grouse in this area; please inform the department (103 South Main St., Waterbury, VT 05676) if you see one of these birds.

The third logging road is also on the left (north) another mile east on Route 105, just before 105 crosses the East Branch of the Nulhegan. This road travels up the valley of the East Branch, goes over a rise, and continues north to Averill on the Canadian border. All boreal specialties, except the Spruce Grouse, have been seen along this road, particularly beyond six miles north of Route 105.

## Maidstone State Park

Maidstone Lake is tucked into the hills west of the Connecticut River. Common Loons nest there, and the surroundings offer a good combination of boreal and hardwood forest birds. To reach the gravel access road to Maidstone Lake, either travel sixteen miles north on Vermont Route 102 from U.S. Route 2 in Lunenburg, or take Route 105 from Island Pond to Bloomfield and drive south five miles on Route 102. A more unorthodox way of reaching this road from farther west is via the South America Pond/Paul Stream Road from Route 105 in Ferdinand. From Route 102 the access road takes one through a mix of hardwood and coniferous forest. Fourteen nesting warblers, including Mourning in cutover areas, may be found along the road. The lake is reached after a three-mile drive, and the state park is another 2.5 miles down the east shore past a multitude of camps. The park has a nature trail around the south end of the lake, which is good for a mix of hardwood and coniferous bird species including Eastern Wood-Pewee, Least and Yellow-bellied flycatchers, Winter Wren, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Northern Parula, and Black-throated Blue and Canada warblers. The best boreal birding near the park is on logging roads north and west of the lake. Recommended are the Paul Stream/South America Pond Road, the road to West Mountain Pond, and logging roads in Brunswick off Route 102 three miles north of the lake access road and just south of Brunswick Springs. Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Rusty Blackbird, and many other boreal specialties have been seen along these roads.



## Bill Sladyk Wildlife Management Area

North of Island Pond on Route 114 is the Bill Sladyk Wildlife Management Area, a nearly 9400-acre natural area preserved primarily for deer and small-game hunters, stretching from the west shore of Norton Pond to the Canadian border near Holland Pond. It is impossible to do justice to this area because it has received little attention from birders until recently, but it has great potential and should not be overlooked by the venturesome. Loons nest on several ponds in the vicinity including Norton, Holland, and Beaver ponds, as do Common and Hooded mergansers. Boreal bird species seen here have included Black-backed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Boreal Chickadee, Bay-breasted Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, and White-winged Crossbill (including July sightings).

To reach this area, drive north on Route 114 for 7.5 miles from Island Pond. Before you reach the shores of Norton Pond, look for a wide gravel road with a well-marked railroad crossing. Turn left (west) here, where there is a prominent sign announcing that you are entering the Wildlife Management Area. Bird along this road as far as it can take you; it passes by some wetlands, then continues through a wooded area to some camps along the shore of Norton Pond. Continue past the camps, and you will eventually come to the west arm of Norton Pond, a large bay with a complex of conifer-and alder-clad wetlands that is worth a careful check. After birding the west arm, continue past Hurricane and Coaticook brooks. The road branches after a moderate-grade hill. The right branch goes through regenerating hardwoods; the left is better for birding



*Black Tern*

*Illustration by Nancy L. Martin*

because it passes through good stands of black spruce and balsam fir. Both branches eventually dead-end, the left branch ending at a gate. The road ahead is worth walking and continues for miles into the hinterlands. *The Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont* provides information on a sampling of trails in this area. I recommend you get a copy and bring along a topographic map and compass for in-depth exploration of the area.

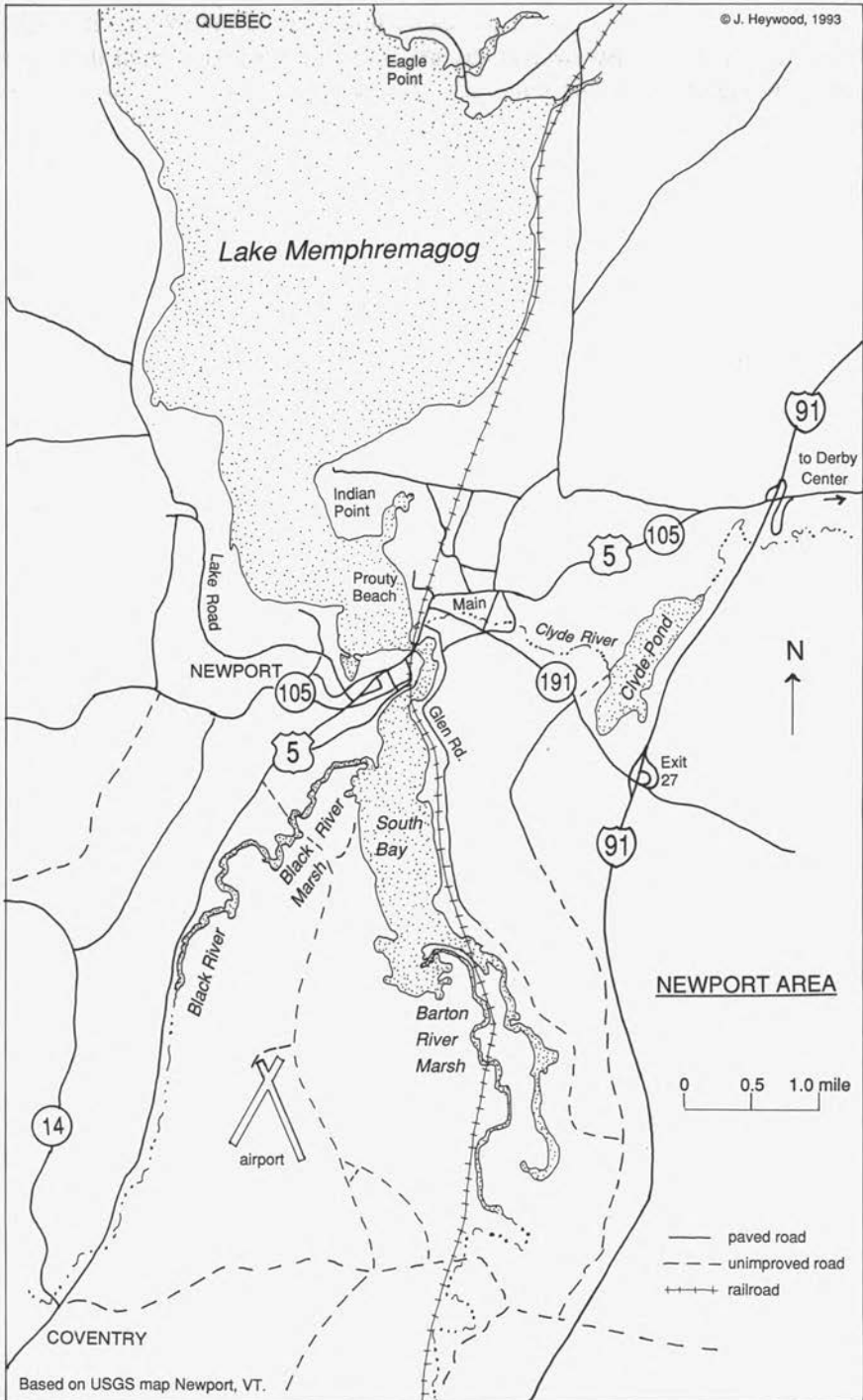
### Newport

On the Canadian border northwest of Island Pond is Lake Memphremagog, with the small city of Newport at its southern end. Over half of this huge lake lies in Quebec, but it is nonetheless Vermont's second largest lake. The delta marshes and swamps of the Barton and Black rivers where they empty into South Bay south of Newport are the most extensive and productive wetlands in Vermont outside of the Champlain Valley. The region also has large dairy farms further contributing to a physiographic and avifaunal similarity to the Champlain Valley. A few Purple Martins nest near Newport (one colony is known in Derby Center), and localized grassland species, such as Upland Sandpiper, nest in the area. To reach Newport, take Interstate 91 north from St. Johnsbury or Route 105 north from Island Pond.

Upon entering Newport on Route 191, turn left onto U.S. 5 (Main Street); if you have come north from Island Pond, you will already be on Main Street. There is a park on the left as you drive down Main Street. Turn left onto Glen Road at the end of it. Proceed on Glen Road for 1.7 miles, with South Bay opening up on your right as you drive along. Turn right onto a gravel road that leads to an Agway grain elevator. Park on the shoulder after crossing the Canadian National Railroad, and scope South Bay during migration. There will be at least three species of gulls on the bay, and may also be loons, grebes, bay and sea ducks, and occasional Black Terns from the marshes to the south. Scan for soaring raptors, including Osprey and Bald Eagle. Hordes of Bank Swallows course over the bay and nest on bluffs above Glen Road.

Continue south for another mile, and look on the right for the fence of a small defunct oil depot before the road changes to gravel. Park your car, and cross through the fence to the railroad tracks, and walk south on them into the Barton River Marsh. Keep your ears open for trains; there is enough fill in the causeway to avoid getting run over, but pay attention. The best birding is in the first half-mile. Nesting marsh birds here include Pied-billed Grebe (four to six pairs, usually noisy in late May and early June), American and Least (rare) bitterns, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Harrier, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, Common Snipe, Black Tern, Willow Flycatcher, and Marsh Wren. Warbling Vireo and migrant songbirds are also found here. An American White Pelican spent a few days in May 1990 in this area.

Upon returning to your car, you may continue south on Glen (actually now





Rediker) Road. There is a canoe launch about a half-mile onward on the right; look sharply, for it is narrow and obscure. The road continues south through a mix of farmland and mixed forest with diverse birdlife to a T-intersection 2.9 miles beyond the oil depot. Turn right (south) here, proceed 1.6 miles to another T-intersection, and turn right, heading downhill to the Barton River. At the river there is another intersection. To continue your circuit of Coventry, turn right (north) here; a left turn will take you south along the Barton River to Orleans where you can return to Newport via Interstate 91. A right turn is called for here, but the flats along the Barton River about a quarter-mile to the left are worth checking during migration (see below). If you do check the flats, you should turn around and retrace your steps to follow the recommended itinerary.

The flats along the river on the left (as you head north and then west) often flood and are good in migration. Rarities seen here have included Glossy Ibis and Laughing Gull. Continue across the Barton River listening for Yellow-throated Vireo and looking for Northern Rough-winged Swallows. Another canoe launch is found on the east bank of the river at the bridge. Continue uphill, where you may take either of two right (north) turns into the farmlands above South Bay. This is a good area for grassland birds, including Upland Sandpiper and Horned Lark. Two to four pairs of Upland Sandpipers nest in the area from a little north of the intersections to just north of the Newport Airport (on the left). At 3.8 miles from either right turn, this road rejoins U.S. Route 5. Just before this intersection you pass through the Black River Marsh, which harbors rails, snipe, Alder Flycatcher, and Northern Waterthrush. Many years ago a Yellow Rail was heard here on an early June night. You can return to Newport by turning right (east) on Route 5.

Another good birding spot is the city-owned Prouty Beach, which may have transient shorebirds and offers a view of the lake. The park has campsites and may be crowded with Canadian campers on holiday weekends (e.g., Victoria Day in late May). Birders who ask politely are usually allowed free access to the park, but be prepared to pay a fee from May to early September. Other views of the lake may be had from roads along it in Derby on the east shore, particularly Eagle Point, and from the west shore in Newport town.

### Useful Addresses and Phone Numbers

The Vermont Travel Division, 134 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602 (802-828-3236)

Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Box 37, Granger Road, Montpelier, VT 05602 (802-223-3443)

Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS), Box 86, Woodstock, VT 05091 (802-457-2779). Bird Alert (evenings, ask for Steve Faccio). Birders are urged to contribute reports to VINS. Most birding in the Northeast Kingdom is by nonresidents, so your reports will be valued.

### Local Chamber of Commerces

Barton	802-525-3242
Burke/Lyndon	802-626-8568
Newport	802-334-7782
Island Pond	802-723-4316
Lake Willoughby	802-525-4496

**WALTER G. ELLISON** is a native of northern New England. With the encouragement of his father, he began birding at the age of six. Walter has birded all corners of Vermont. He authored a bird-finding guide to the Green Mountain State in 1981 and was a major contributor to Vermont's Breeding Bird Atlas. He earned a master's degree in ecology at the University of Connecticut in 1991 for a study of the range expansion of the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and is currently pursuing a doctorate at the State University of New York at Albany. Walter plans to study the effects of isolated breeding populations on the genetics of Bicknell's (Gray-checked) Thrush.

**NANCY MARTIN**, a native of Rutland, Vermont, received her B.A. in biology from Skidmore College. Before moving to Albany, New York, in the fall of 1992, she was Naturalist at the Vermont Institute of Natural Studies (VINS) in Woodstock, Vermont, for fourteen years. Her work at VINS included answering a wide variety of natural history questions from the public, bird banding and other research projects, developing and presenting the "Hawks of Vermont" program using permanent resident raptors, and illustrating VINS publications. Nancy and Walter have been regular birding companions since the Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas and married in 1986.

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