

It was suggested at the Council meeting that member clubs might take out extra subscriptions for donation to local libraries, museums, nature centers and institutions of learning. Perhaps extra club copies could be put to this use.

The list of organizations with which we exchange publications was published in the May, 1971, issue of *The Kingbird*. Anyone wishing to have the use of any of these publications on a month's basis should get in touch with the Editor.

*Frederick C. Dittrich*

## SHOREBIRD RECAPTURE OPERATION

The University of Montreal is conducting a research program to study the migration routes of North American shorebirds in relation to their flight range capabilities.

A field staff undertook a marking program in 1970 on the Atlantic coast (Magdalen Islands and Sable Island) of southbound migrating shorebirds to ascertain the percentage of birds that use an overseas route to the Caribbean and northern South America as compared with those that follow the coast down to Florida before passing to South America.

Shorebirds will be mist-netted and banded with regular bands, from July 10 to October 15 again this year. Each bird will be color marked; feather dyes will be used on the underparts and streamers attached to the leg or to the wing. Birds caught on the Magdalen Islands will be marked YELLOW (dye and streamer), while the ones from Sable Island will bear RED markings. The six last figures of the band number will be written on the streamer; they will be large enough to be read with binoculars or telescope. The flight range capabilities of each individual will be estimated from its fresh weight and other parameters. The same program will be repeated in 1972.

The collaboration of all bird watchers is requested to make this program a success. Anyone sighting these marked birds should (1) note the band number on the streamer, and report the locality, date, color of streamer or dye and species; (2) weigh the bird (when caught alive); (3) report any sight records of color marked shorebirds (underparts and streamer, yellow or red).

All reports and other communications should be addressed to Dr. Raymond McNeil, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Montreal, C.P. 6128, Montreal 101, Quebec, Canada.

## FIELD NOTES

**Bar-tailed Godwit at Moriches, L.I.** While accompanying a Vermont friend, Mrs. John McCormick, on an annual shore-birding trip, Mrs. Crispin Cooke and I were birding on an island straddling Moriches Inlet, Suffolk Co., commonly known as Bird Island, on Mon., May 10th, 1971. As we approached the extensive mudflats on the west end in squally rain and wind, we spotted an unusual Godwit feeding near

Black-bellied Plovers. About 4" longer in body than they and 2" taller, it was rather a slender bird and not big enough to be a Marbled. It had a rusty chestnut neck and breast, light brown reticulated back, and its rump showed a white arrow up the back above a tail narrowly barred crossways with grey-brown (much like the Dowitcher pattern and not at all like a Hudsonian.) This we saw easily when the bird stretched a wing and tail at close range. Its legs were blue-grey and its face light tan with no eye-line and a bland expression. The bill was long, upturned, and two-toned, pinkish at the base and dark grey at the tip. It fed often in an upward shovelling manner that I have noticed in Marbled Godwits. Though not as brightly colored as the illustration in Peterson's *Birds of Britain and Europe*, (rainy day perhaps?) it was easily identifiable as a Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) in spring plumage. Interestingly enough, though there are five recorded sightings in the northeastern U.S., two in Mass. in 1907 and 1937, two in southern N.J., the last one (though a Nov. bird) was in 1946 in the very same area! (John Bull, *Birds of the New York Area*)

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Ed Note—This godwit was seen again at Bird Island on May 12 by Dennis Puleston. His comments confirm the details given above by Mrs. Conolly. Also, a Bar-tailed Godwit was present at Port Canaveral, Florida from October to at least late February. A Black-tailed Godwit was present at the Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge from June into August. In early August all four of the world's godwits—Marbled, Bar-tailed, Hudsonian and Black-tailed—were observed at that Refuge.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPRING SEASON

FRITZ SCHEIDER

Cold weather and rain—or in some cases, snow—in April persistently dampened and stalled migration across the state and May fared little better. The uniform complaint of tardy migrants (some ten days to two weeks behind schedule) is sounded in every regional report and the numbers given for certain species indicate that, though first arrivals had made it into the various sectors, the bulk of such species as cuckoos, Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Indigo Bunting, and Grasshopper Sparrow, had not made it back before the spring period terminated. A great many record late arrival and late departure dates ensued and I suspect a fair share of the summer material will even more accurately document this. The lingering ice and snow of many areas precluded sustaining of certain migrant species and a check of arrival dates in Region 7 shows what adverse weather conditions can do in advance of even common, hardy species like Yellow-shafted Flicker, Eastern Meadowlark, and White-throated and Fox Sparrows. Major peak migration dates occurred May 11–12, May 16, and May 22–23 but late May saw little grounding of migrants and the late May rush of confusing female warblers was largely missed.