

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS



Richard Guthrie with Greater Shearwater at Burlington, Vt.
June 18, 1976 —Photo by Mike Peterson

Greater Shearwater flies up the Hudson River to Lake Champlain: The Greater Shearwater (*Puffinus gravis*) breeds on Tristan da Cunha, Gough, and the Falkland Islands in the south Atlantic, ranging at sea north over the western Atlantic in May and June after nesting, and moving south over the eastern Atlantic in fall. Bull (1974) notes it as a "Regular summer visitant off Long Island, occasionally common at the east end. Unknown elsewhere." During the second week of June '76 they appeared off Montauk and Cox's Ledge, as expected.

More unexpected was the Greater Shearwater Richard Guthrie saw through a 30x 'scope as the bird flew north up the Hudson R. below Albany the evening of Monday, June 14! Dick notified other birders to the north and shortly the

shearwater was spotted as it passed Selkirk, still headed up the river. Thinking the bird might make it to Champlain, Dick called Mike Peterson, who in turn passed the word to High Peaks, Otter Creek, and Northern Adirondack Audubon, asking Otter Creek to relay the alert to Green Mountain Audubon. A Champlain search was begun Tuesday.

By Thursday, Mike was able to notify Albany that the search was ended. An exhausted Greater Shearwater had been rescued from the lake at Burlington by Maureen McMahon on June 16, and been identified by Green Mountain Audubon. The only other Vermont record is of a specimen found at Rutland following the 1938 hurricane. On Friday Dick Guthrie journeyed to Burlington with Bill Lee and Mike Peterson for a reunion with his shearwater. The bird is apparently recovering with Ms. McMahon, and it is hoped that it can survive and eventually be released at sea.

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The above item is excerpted from the *High Peaks Audubon Newsletter*, Volume 4, page 50. Unfortunately, the bird succumbed on Saturday, June 19th.
—Eds.

An unusual robin's nest in St. Lawrence County: An American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) has been nesting on a garbage packer truck at Jacques Cartier State Park, St. Lawrence County, for the past three years. In the course of conversation with Harry Howard, a park employee, we discovered the unusual nesting behavior of the robin. Although the nests of the past 2 years failed to produce young, this year's nest had 4 eggs from which 2 young hatched, the nestlings living to 8 days of age. We found the nestlings dead on the ground under the truck on 10 June 1976.

The truck was engaged in collecting refuse for two to four hours on Mondays and Fridays during the early part of the camping season when the birds were nesting. The nests were built between the cab and the packer on the transmission hump, very well protected from the weather and not visible to the casual observer. The parent birds did not accompany the truck on its run, which took it on a 40 mile round trip. The truck always returned to the same parking spot, which would not disrupt the birds' concept of nest in relationship to territory.

The heat of the engine and transmission was evidently adequate to maintain the egg and nestling temperatures during the absence of the parents. Nest failure this year was due either to a sudden stop of the truck, causing the ejection of the young from the nest, or to the traumatic effect of the noisy, hot ride which might have encouraged the young to leave the nest prematurely.

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