

quechee River, between Woodstock and Dewey's Pond in Quechee (ASR, A. L. Gosnell and S. B. Laughlin); and a pair was observed in June and July 1978 at Gale Meadows Pond in Winhall (ASR, W. J. Norse).

Single Osprey have appeared in summer months in Vermont with increasing frequency in recent years. These may have been wandering, second-year birds. Henny and Van Velzen (1972) estimated that 5% to 10% of Ospreys on the breeding grounds are 2-year-olds. They found that 2-year-olds may pair up and build a nest, but will not lay eggs.

The species is more common during migration than it is in the summer, as hawk-watch summaries and *Records of Vermont Birds* reports attest. Spring totals range between 23 and 100 Ospreys, while autumn totals are 39 to 150. Peak hawk-watch counts in the fall usually occur around the second and third weeks of September; up to 41 Ospreys may be observed in a day (0.18 per observer hour) (RVB, Fall 1980). Spring migrants are generally observed from late March to late May, and fall visitors as late as November 3.

CHRISTOPHER FICHTEL

Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

The Bald Eagle is one of two birds found in Vermont that are classified as Endangered by the federal government; it is also classified as Endangered by the state of Vermont. At present Vermont appears to have no nesting population of Bald Eagles. During the Atlas Project survey, Bald Eagles were recorded as possible breeders at South Bay, Lake Memphremagog, near Newport. Single adult birds were observed at South Bay in June or July in 1975, 1976, 1978, 1979, and 1981. In the mid-1960s, sightings were made of Bald Eagles from the Lake Memphremagog drainage in Coventry, Derby, Holland, and Charleston (Stewart 1965). The Holland sighting was of a pair on May 29, 1962. Other Vermont localities where Bald Eagles have been sighted include Lake Champlain and, during migration or in the winter, major river drainages. Sightings of Bald Eagles near Lake Champlain have been recorded from the Crown Point bridge north to Mud Creek in Alburg. During the summer of 1982, one adult and one or two immatures were observed several times at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge (RVB, Summer 1982).

Bald Eagles are scarce but regular migrants in Vermont; up to 12 individuals

have been observed in a season. In the spring they are seen from late March through May, and in fall from late August through December.

Historically, breeding Bald Eagles in Vermont have been very rare. Thompson (1853) knew of no nesting records but mentioned that the species was regularly seen. Knowlton (1878) and Perkins and Howe (1901) mentioned Bald Eagles breeding at Castleton, presumably near Lake Bomoseen. Bald Eagles nested at Lake Bomoseen in the 1940s (S. B. Laughlin, pers. comm.) Fortner et al. (1933) considered the Bald Eagle to be a "rare summer resident."

Investigations of possible nest sites during a survey in the 1960s revealed no evidence of nesting Bald Eagles (Stewart 1965); however, a summer roost tree was discovered in Vernon. Summer records of adult and immature Bald Eagles near Lakes Champlain and Memphremagog may represent breeding birds from New York and Quebec or wandering birds from the southern U.S. population, which breeds in late winter and wanders northward after breeding. The increased number of sightings in recent years provides hope that Vermont may again play host to nesting Bald Eagles.

CHRISTOPHER FICHTEL

No. of priority blocks in which recorded

TOTAL 1 (0.6%)

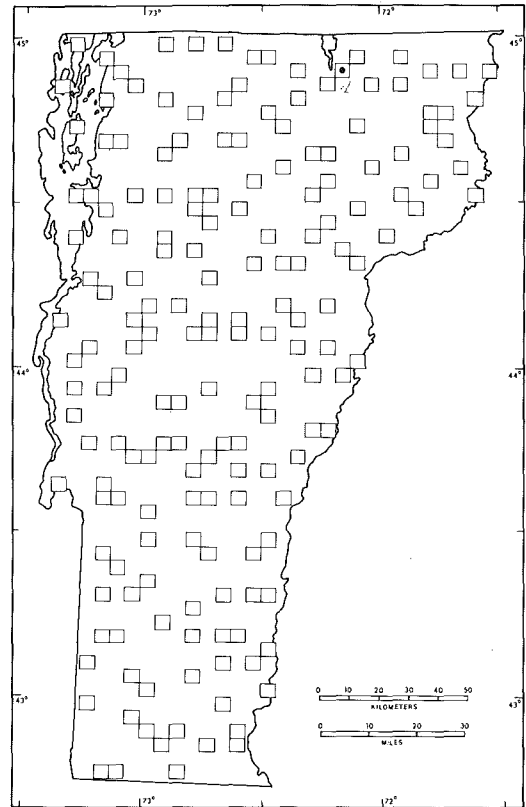
Possible breeding: 1 (100% of total)

Probable breeding: 0 (0% of total)

Confirmed breeding: 0 (0% of total)

Physiographic regions in which recorded

	no. of priority blocks	% of region's priority blocks	% of species' total priority blocks
Champlain Lowlands	0	0	0
Green Mountains	0	0	0
North Central	1	5	100
Northeast Highlands	0	0	0
East Central	0	0	0
Taconic Mountains	0	0	0
Eastern Foothills	0	0	0



Ring-necked Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

The date when the Ring-necked Pheasant was first introduced to Vermont is uncertain, but the Vermont legislature gave the species protection in 1892 (Foote 1946). Birds were primarily stocked in the Champlain Lowlands; up to 5,000 were released at a shooting preserve in Shelburne in 1894. Banded birds from this release were later found near Bennington and Barre (Foote 1946). Favorable conditions, including mild winters and fields of grain and corn, helped fuel a population increase. However, a severe winter in 1904–5 decimated the population, and numbers remained low into the 1920s. The first state-run game farm for raising pheasants was opened in 1922 in Milton by the Vermont Fish and Game Service. An average of 1,500 birds were raised

annually until 1937 when, because of economic difficulties, the farm was closed (Foote 1946). The Fish and Game Service continued stocking the Champlain Valley, lower Connecticut River valley, and Bennington County, using pheasants purchased from outside the state (Foote 1946). This system was eventually abandoned. On a trial basis between 1966 and 1971, the Fish and Game Service again stocked pheasants for hunting; since then Ring-necks have not been released by that agency (J. D. Stewart, pers. comm.). Local releases by private individuals have continued.

During the 1976–81 Atlas Project survey, nine reports (six possible and three probable nestings), encompassing both priority and non-priority blocks, were recorded.