

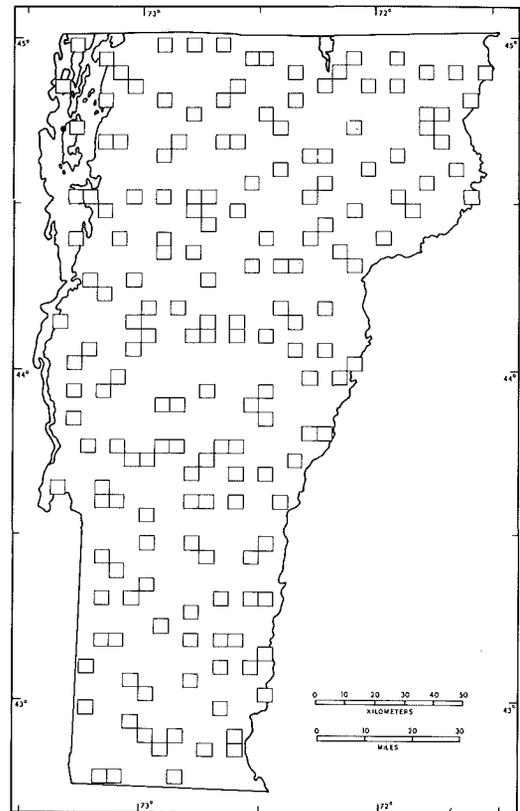
Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus

The Double-crested Cormorant's breeding population in the early 1900s consisted of four distinct groups. Three primarily coastal populations bred in eastern Canada and Maine; from North Carolina through Florida to Louisiana; and in the West from Oregon to Mexico. The fourth population nested from Utah and Alberta across the northern Mississippi River drainage to the western Great Lakes (Bent 1922). By the 1930s, there were three specimens and one sight record listed for Vermont by Fortner et al. (1933). Cormorant populations have increased dramatically since that time; mid-continent breeders reached the eastern end of Lake Ontario in 1945 (Bull 1974). Northern coastal colonies are now found as far south as Long Island Sound. During the Atlas Project survey, observers documented increasingly frequent June and July occurrences of the Double-crested Cormorant on Lake Champlain, particularly around Young Island (RVB 1976-81). Despite careful monitoring, only possible breeding status for the species was recorded during the Atlas Project, although 35 Double-crested Cormorants were observed on Young Island on June 27, 1981 (BVR, S. B. Laughlin).

The year after the Atlas Project ended (1982), the first known breeding of the Double-crested Cormorant in Vermont occurred, in a stick nest in a dead tree near the water on Young Island; while 1 bird incubated, 27 looked on (RVB, Summer 1982). In 1983, the breeding colony had exploded to 34 nests on trees fringing the island, and adults numbered 108. Further population increases and colonization of other Lake Champlain islands are likely, given the number of nonbreeding birds currently present.

The Vermont cormorant nests are constructed of sticks and placed in dead or dying trees. In coastal regions, Double-crested Cormorants often nest on cliffs or rocky islands (Bent 1922). Parents share incubation of the 2 to 7 (usually 3 to 4) chalky, pale blue eggs for 24 to 25 days. The al-



No. of priority blocks in which recorded

TOTAL 0 (0%)

Possible breeding: 0 (0% 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	0	0	0
Northeast Highlands	0	0	0
East Central	0	0	0
Taconic Mountains	0	0	0
Eastern Foothills	0	0	0

tricial young are unable to fly until they are 5 to 6 weeks old. Full independence from the parents may take 10 weeks to achieve (Palmer 1962). Strong fliers when airborne, Double-crested Cormorants usually depart

from Vermont in October; they winter from the mid-Atlantic states south to the Gulf Coast.

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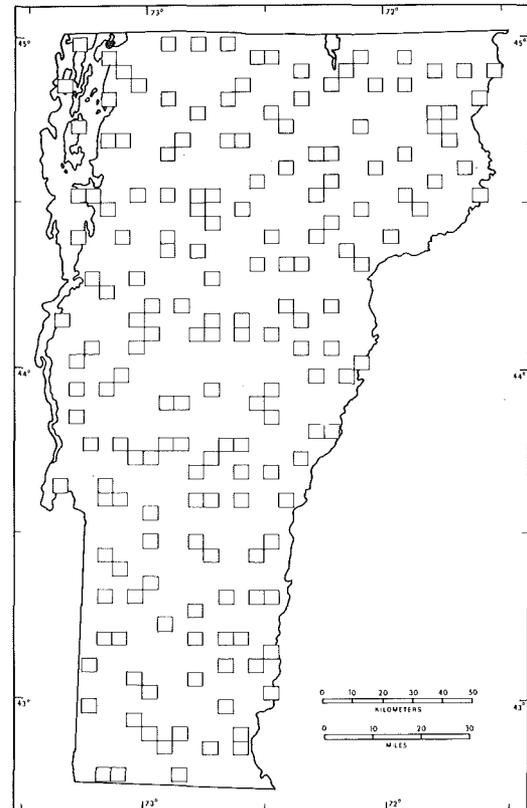
Great Egret

Casmerodius albus

Great Egrets breed on all continents but Antarctica. In North America they breed north into parts of southern Canada (AOU 1983). Most Vermont sightings fall between mid April and late May, and from early August to mid November (RVB 1973-83). The species is known to disperse widely in late summer before fall migration (Palmer 1962). Great Egrets winter in North America, primarily along the southern coasts, and south through South America (AOU 1983).

During the Atlas Project, the Great Egret was recorded as a probable breeder (for a pair present during the breeding season) at the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. Two egrets were observed on the Missisquoi River on June 15, 1977, and were seen almost daily until July 1. Thereafter, occasional single egrets were observed. On July 28 on Missisquoi Bay three Great Egrets were observed, including an adult-sized, dark-billed bird suspected of being an immature. The birds were carefully identified as Great Egrets; there was also an albino Great Blue Heron present during the same summer at the refuge. George O'Shea, the refuge manager, believed that the egrets could have nested in the Great Blue Heron rookery.

The earliest record of Great Egrets in Vermont was of two birds collected in New Haven, in the Champlain Lowlands, during August 1882 (Howe 1902). Forbush (1925) alluded to their occurrence in Vermont and stated that they are "rare or occasional summer visitors." Apparent "invasions" occurred in 1936 and 1948 (Smith 1950b). More than 50 Great Egrets were seen in August 1936 at the mouth of the Black River



No. of priority blocks in which recorded

TOTAL 0 (0%)

Possible breeding: 0 (0% 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	0	0	0
Northeast Highlands	0	0	0
East Central	0	0	0
Taconic Mountains	0	0	0
Eastern Foothills	0	0	0