

Osprey

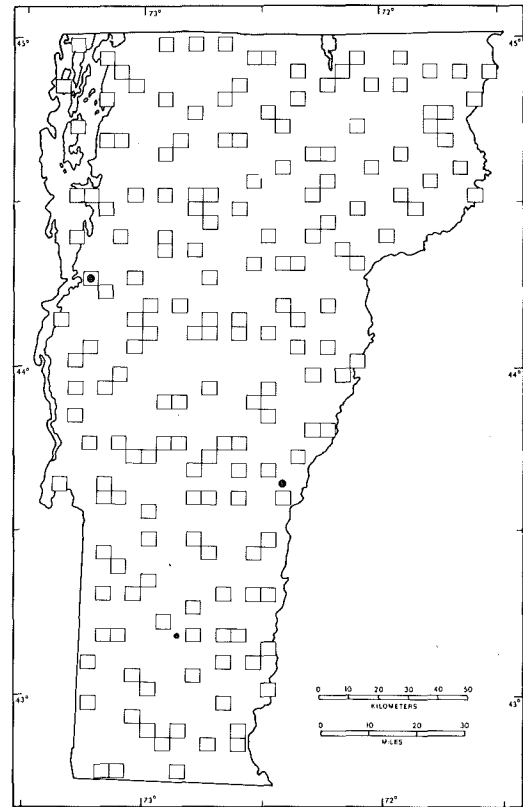
Pandion haliaetus

The Osprey is listed as Threatened in New York and New Hampshire and as Endangered in Vermont. After 10 years on *American Birds' Blue List* (Tate 1981), the Osprey, also known as the "fish hawk," was removed in 1982, in recognition of its apparent recovery as a result of increased control of the pesticide DDT (Tate and Tate 1982).

Although Cutting (1884) stated that he had never seen an Osprey nest in Vermont, Perkins and Howe (1901), Fortner et al. (1933), and Smith (1934) listed the species as an uncommon to rare summer resident and a common migrant.

The historical records yield only three confirmed nesting sites: Shelburne in 1962, South Bay of Lake Memphremagog in 1965, and Barton in 1975. A pair was observed at their nest at the north end of Shelburne Pond in 1963, having returned in the spring soon after the ice melted to a site that had apparently been used for some years (GMAS records, P. Upton; Spear, Field notes). No young were raised in 1963; in 1964, the nest fell and one of the Ospreys was reportedly shot (Spear, Field notes). A nest with an attending adult was located on August 25, 1965 at South Bay in Newport by an observer who considered the species a summer resident there (Eldred, Field notes). A nest in a live, large white pine was observed and photographed in Barton in 1975; it had reportedly been active since 1973. No Osprey were observed in 1976 or 1977, and in 1977 the nest fell (J. D. Stewart, R. Candy, pers. comm.).

During the Atlas Project three probable nesting reports were obtained. A pair was observed on May 30, 1977 at a nest in a large pine on a river in the Champlain Lowlands (its location is being kept confidential by request); the site was not visited in 1978, and no Osprey were in evidence in 1979 (ASR, W. Shedd). Elsewhere, a pair was present in 1977 throughout the breeding season (May through August) along the Ottawa-



No. of priority blocks in which recorded

TOTAL 1 (0.6%)

Possible breeding: 0 (0% of total)
 Probable breeding: 1 (100% 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	1	3	100
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

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.

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