



Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund
Final report for project: 12-06
Delivering Final Breeding Bird Atlas Results to Nova Scotians

Project objectives

Our objectives in 2012-13 were to bring the results of the Atlas project to all interested Nova Scotians by developing, and publishing the English and French editions of the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas and to re-configure the Atlas website with additional maps, text and technical information. While we underestimated the time that it would take to write, edit and produce the final atlas publication and website, we are well on our way and have completed many of the activities planned for 2012-13.

Results summary

At present, 200+ species accounts have been reviewed and edited internally and are now ready for an external review. Three introductory chapters have been drafted and two others are in the process of being written. The modeling technique used to map abundance and probability of observation has been determined and at present we are close to finalizing how those results will be presented in the book (mapped).

Activities progress

Activity	Results
1) Finalize species accounts, introductory chapters and synthesis chapters for the book and website.	All species (>200) accounts have been edited and are ready for external review (Figure 1). Text has been written for Methods, Coverage and Bio-geography Chapters, and have undergone initial review. Acknowledgements Chapter has been drafted. Abundance and Change Chapter will be completed once maps are finalized but are currently being drafted and several additional summary analyses (e.g., examining change by species guild are complete). Conservation Applications Chapter is currently being drafted.
2) Finalize data analyses for the book and website and produce final graphics showing analyses results.	Technique for modeling abundance and probability of observation determined, peer-reviewed and finalized. Technique goes beyond what is presented in other, previously published Canadian Atlases (e.g., Ontario Atlas). Currently determining how to present those results. Several iterations of abundance and probability of observation maps have been produced (Figure 2) to

	determine the best way to present atlas results. Several options have been considered including whether to present information that allows better comparison within species or between species, and how to best present where the species is most abundant.
3) Produce final maps for book and website, including maps of species breeding evidence, relative abundance, changes in distribution and changes in the probability of observation.	Ongoing (see above).
4) Produce final additional figures for the book and website, and assemble, format and finalize photographs for the book and website.	Several figures have been initially drafted for Chapters including Methods, Coverage, Bio-geography and Abundance and Change. Still need to be reviewed and finalized. Photographs have been chosen for most species accounts (and all have been narrowed down to at least two choices) and many finalized (Over 10,000 photos submitted and reviewed). Most photos have been processed and formatted for publication.
5) Finalize interactive tools for Atlas website, produce final content for web site and make it available online (final database, text, maps, figures and graphics).	Final breeding evidence maps and database are available online. Individuals can currently generate numerous data summaries from the website and online maps, however this task is ongoing and will continue as Atlas products are finalized. The “look” and “feel” of the website, as well as text, still need to be updated and will be based on final publication.
6) Final text, figures and graphics delivered to Goose Lane for layout, design, copy-editing.	Not complete
7) Translation.	Not complete
8) Printing and launch.	Not complete. Pre-sale is ongoing and purchasers of Atlas have been informed of delays.

Black-throated Green Warbler

Paruline à gorge noire

Setophaga virens

To atlasers, the Black-throated Green Warbler - the Atlas's flagship species and logo - will forever represent umpteen hours of navigating back roads, being eaten by mosquitoes, and recording hundreds of birds — all in the name of conservation. For others, it is one of the more easily recognized wood-warblers, known for its loud, buzzy repertoire, and common in our northeastern forests. Indeed, its breeding range extends throughout the southeastern Boreal Forest and Boreal Hardwood Transition, down through the Appalachians.

In the Maritimes, the Black-throated Green Warbler is primarily associated with older deciduous, coniferous, and mixed forests, and tends to occupy drier habitats. The species also takes advantage of habitats created by timber harvesting, if some mature components and structural complexity are maintained. The Black-throated Green is evenly distributed across the region, slightly less so in the highlands and taiga, where tall forests are scarce. The species is most abundant in NS, and its highest densities are in uplands and lowlands characterized by older, mixed forests, including NB's southern Valley Lowlands and the adjacent Fundy Coast, the NS Uplands, parts of Eastern and Western NS, and central PEI.

The Black-throated Green Warbler was widespread in both atlases, with no major changes in its overall distribution, but some retraction from Eastern Lowlands and Northern Uplands. The probability of observation increased substantially across much of the region, most notably in the northern Valley Lowlands and on PEI. BBS data show this species is stable or increasing across most of its range. Its increases here may relate to the maturation of conifer plantations.

—Becky Stewart

Figure 1. Sample species account. Over 200 accounts have been edited and are ready for external review.

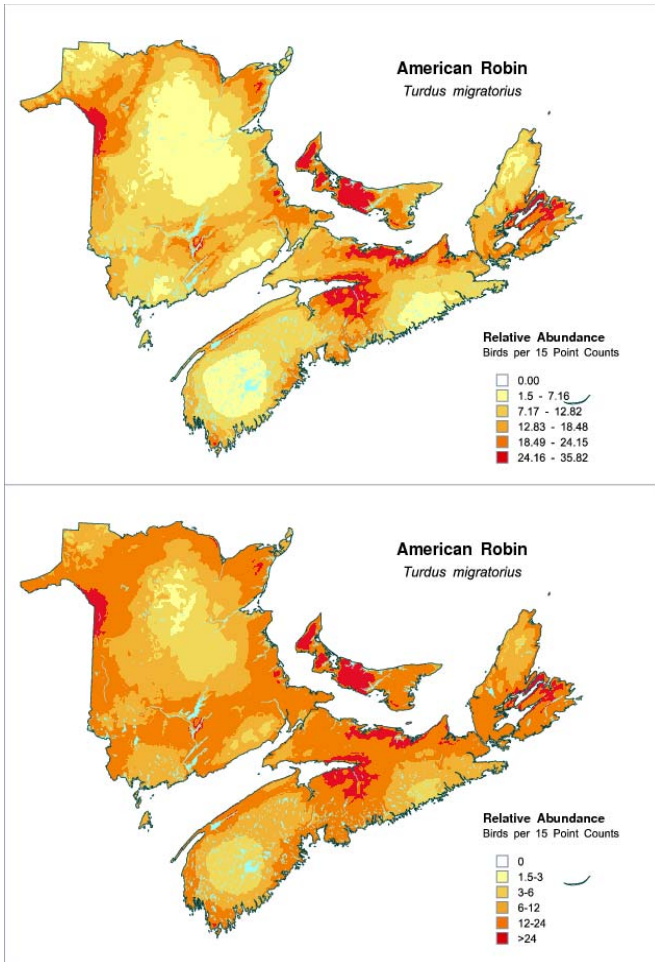


Figure 2. One example of different ways of displaying Atlas abundance information. The top abundance map for American Robin uses an arithmetic scale, the bottom a log scale. The underlying information is essentially unchanged. At present the committee is looking at these and other examples to determine how to best present the Atlas results in the publication.