

weather and competition with other species may play a role, but as these have always been in force seem unlikely explanations in themselves. In Ontario, loss of thorny pastures and roadside hawthorns have long been implicated, a suggestion that is at least partially supported by its current stronghold along the southern edge of the shield, where oldfield habitat with hedgerows and hawthorns can still be found.

As some areas of apparently suitable habitat lack shrikes, habitat loss does not provide a complete explanation for shrike declines. Bent (1950), commenting on the food of one of the races, noted that "Migrant Shrikes" are more insectivorous than the Northern species, a factor that could make it more susceptible to chemical insecticides, and as herbicides are used frequently to clear roadside vegetation attractive to this species, these chemicals may also produce undesirable side effects. A study in Illinois indicated an inverse relationship between eggshell thickness in this species and levels of DDT.

Shortly after automobiles came into relatively common usage, Loggerhead Shrikes were found to be susceptible to being killed by them, and this appears to be an important factor currently in parts of Canada.

Clearly, this shrike has declined dramatically in Canada and over most of its range. Studies documenting its current range and investigating possible reasons for its decline are needed urgently if its slide into Threatened status is to be halted before the Endangered stage is reached.

(The above report is number three in a continuing series of Profiles on Risk Status of Canadian Birds. prepared by Mr. McNicholl of the Long Point Bird Observatory.)



Environmental Calendar

- DECEMBER 2: The Island Nature Trust will be featured on "A Tip of the Hat" on Lorne Greene's New Wilderness.
- DECEMBER 2: The Natural History Society's December meeting will be held in Meeting Room #2 in the Provincial Health Building at 8 p.m. Diane Griffin and Dan McAskill will speak on Wildlife '87.
- DECEMBER 6: The Island Nature Trust's First Annual Bird Seed Sale (see details on page 10). Do something doubly good for the birds: feed them and help the Trust to buy habitat for them.
- JANUARY 6: The first meeting of 1987 for the NHS will feature Winston Johnston as guest speaker. Winston will talk on Wildlife on Stamps. If the location of the meeting does change, it will be announced at the December meeting and over the radio.
- JANUARY 15: The Island Nature Trust will hold a public meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Farm Centre. Dan McAskill will speak on "Wildlife '87" and Art Smith will speak on "The Provincial Conservation Strategy".