ONTARIO BIRDS

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Ontario Field Ornithologists

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Ontario Field Ornithologists is an organization dedicated to the study of birdlife in Ontario. It was formed to unify the ever-growing numbers of field ornithologists (birders/birdwatchers) across the province, and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among its members. The Ontario Field Ornithologists officially oversees the activities of the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC), publishes a newsletter (*OFO News*) and a journal (*Ontario Birds*), operates a bird sightings listserv (ONTBIRDS, moderated by Mike Street), hosts field trips throughout Ontario, and holds an Annual General Meeting in the autumn.

All persons interested in bird study, regardless of their level of expertise, are invited to become members of the Ontario Field Ornithologists. Membership rates can be obtained from the address below. All members receive *Ontario Birds* and *OFO News*. Please send membership enquiries to: **Ontario Field Ornithologists, Box 455, Station R, Toronto, Ontario M4G 4E1**

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Ontario Birds

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The aim of *Ontario Birds* is to provide a vehicle for documentation of the birds of Ontario. We encourage the submission of full length articles and short notes on the status, distribution, identification, and behaviour of birds in Ontario, as well as location guides to significant Ontario birdwatching areas, book reviews, and similar material of interest on Ontario birds.

Material submitted for publication should be on computer disk, or typewritten (double-spaced). Please follow the style of this issue of *Ontario Birds*. All submissions are subject to review and editing. Submit items for publication to the Editors at the address noted above.

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by *Ron Scovell*

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Letters to the Editors

Gulls Eating Voles

In response to Gerry Cuccio's letter regarding Ring-billed Gulls eating meadow voles (*Ontario Birds* 17: 1), during the 1960s and 1970s, it was a common sight here to have flocks of Ring-billed Gulls follow the tractor and plow in the fall of the year, snatching earthworms and anything else that might become exposed as the earth was turned. I recall numerous occasions when Ring-billed Gulls would be seen devouring live meadow voles as they scampered along the bare furrows within a few feet of the rear of the plow. These they would swallow whole; other times the gulls took flight with the meadow voles in their beaks and consumed them during flight. The birding was often quite profitable during fall plowing as the occasional Red-tailed Hawk would also join in on the feeding frenzy.

Terry Sprague
Picton, Ontario

Crossbills Eating Ash

Re: Ron Tozer's note on White-winged Crossbills eating ash (*Ontario Birds* 17: 27-29), we have observed this behaviour as well in Algonquin Park. On 7 March 1999, we were birding the Mew Lake Campground on a cold (-10°C), sunny day. In one of the fire pits, a pair of White-winged Crossbills was pecking in the ashes. We were able to approach them within 2 m, and confirmed they were eating bits of ash. The female lingered longer, presumably eating more ash, before the pair flew off. They seemed quite unperturbed by our presence and left only when it seemed they had their fill of ash and/or charcoal. There were several winter campers at the site, so several fire pits had ash in them. We didn't notice any other "ash eaters", but we only birded the area for about an hour. As many people know, in March there were many crossbills in the Parkway Corridor, likely breeding. It was common to see them eating grit or salt at the side of Highway 60.

Mike Lauzon
Judith Nancekivell
Scarborough, Ontario

Articles

Ontario Bird Records Committee Report for 1998

Robert Z. Dobos

Introduction

This is the 17th annual report of the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC). The members of the Committee in 1998 were David Brewer, Peter Burke, Robert Curry, Robert Dobos (non-voting Secretary), Nicholas Escott, Douglas McRae, Ronald Pittaway and Ronald Tozer (Chairman). Ross James served as Museum Liaison (non-voting) to the OBRC.

The number of reports received and reviewed by the Committee was substantially lower in 1998 than in recent previous years. This may reflect a relatively poorer year for rarities in Ontario in 1998, as perceived by some observers. However, a substantial number of reports of sightings from late in 1998 were received early in 1999, which will be reviewed by the 1999 Committee. Of the 124 records reviewed in 1998, 71 percent were accepted, which is again lower than in recent years; possible reasons for this decline are not known.

The Ontario bird checklist increased by two, with the acceptance and addition of Eurasian Collared-Dove (south) and Tropical /Couch's Kingbird (north). The official Ontario list now stands at 472 species. Bewick's Wren was also a new addition for northern Ontario. The Committee continues to review reports of certain recognizable forms, and has accepted a new subspecies group for Ontario, the "Pink-sided" Junco. No new breeding species for the province were accepted in 1998.

OBRC records are archived at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). Researchers and other interested persons may examine filed reports and Committee decisions at the ROM by appointment. Please contact Brad Millen, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Biology, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6, or call 416-586-5519.

Listing of Records

The format of this report follows that used in last year's annual report (Dobos 1998). Accepted records are listed by their English and scientific names following the Seventh Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Check-list (1998). Following the names, a binomial numbering system appears. The first number indi-

Figure 1: Ontario Bird Records Committee members for 1998. Left to right, front row: Bob Curry, David Brewer, Nick Escott; back row: Ron Tozer, Doug McRae, Ron Pittaway, Rob Dobos, Peter Burke. Photo by *Kayo J. Roy.*

cates the total number of accepted records (by the OBRC) prior to 1 January 1982 (the formation of the OBRC); the second is the total number of accepted records from 1982 to 1998 (including those listed in this report). An asterisk in place of the first number indicates that documentation was not required for the occurrence of these species prior to 1982. Date(s) of occurrence, number of birds, sex, plumage, and location(s) are provided when known. Counties, Districts and Regional Municipalities are shown in italics. The plumage terminology used here follows the Humphrey and Parkes (1959) system (see Pittaway 1995a). All contributors of documentation are listed. Contributors who were known to be the finders of the bird are underlined. Finders who did not submit a report are also listed, when known.

Every effort has been made to verify information published regarding a record; however, it is possible that some inaccuracies may still exist. We would welcome any corrections or updates to any such records. Where dates or other details listed here differ from those quoted in other published sources (for example, *Birders Journal* or *Field Notes*) we have used the most accurate available information.

All records that were not

accepted because of uncertain identification or origin are listed separately. Contributors of all "not accepted" reports receive a letter from the Chairperson explaining the reasons for the decision, along with copies of the comments of the voting members. These reports are also kept on permanent file at the ROM. A "not accepted" record can be reconsidered by the OBRC if new evidence is submitted to the Committee for review.

Acknowledgements

The OBRC would like to thank the many observers who submitted reports, photographs, sketches, videos and specimens of rare birds during 1998. We are grateful to Bruce Mactavish of Newfoundland who provided expert opinion on a "Common Gull" report. The following people are also thanked either for obtaining and forwarding reports from others, or assisting the Committee in other ways: Robert Andrle, Margaret Bain, Barbara Charlton, Allen Chartier, Bob Curry, Willie D'Anna, Bruce Di Labio, Nick Escott, John Fischer, Dave Fidler, Jean Griffin, Phill Holder, Jean Iron, Andrew Jano, David Martin, Kevin McLaughlin, Chris Michener, John Miles, Martin Parker, Ron Pittaway, Alf Rider, Ron Ridout, Kayo Roy, Doug Sadler, Roy Smith, Mike Street, Ron Tozer, and Alan Wormington.

I would especially like to thank the other 1998 OBRC members for their assistance and cooperation throughout the past year, and for their helpful comments on previous drafts of this report.

Accepted Records

Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica* South Only (3/15)

1996 - one, definitive alternate, 29 April, Sauble Beach, *Bruce* (Peter D. Middleton).

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis* (0/11)

1997 - one, basic, 28 October, Bass Lake, *Simcoe* (James R. Macey).

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* (3/8)

1995 - one, light morph, 7 December, Ottawa, *Ottawa-Carleton* (Richard M. Poulin).

1994 - one, light morph, 14-16 December, Limoges, *Prescott and Russell* (Bruce M. Di Labio, found by Michel Mainville) - photos on file.

The Ottawa bird was observed flying inland over the city by the startled observer. The Limoges bird was picked up in a weakened condition on the finder's front lawn. It was taken to a wildlife rehabilitation centre where it was nurtured back to health, and was eventually flown to Nova Scotia where it was released back to the wild.

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* (2/19)

1996 - one, juvenal, 12 November, Pakenham, *Lanark* (Bruce M. Di Labio, found by Mike Thompson) - photos on file.

This bird was found in a weakened condition and taken to a wildlife rehabilitator, where it subsequently died on 15 November.

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* South Only, Before 1994 Only (2/32)

1990 - three, 10 June, Balmy Beach, *Grey* (Harvey Henderson) - photos on file.

Sightings after 31 December 1993 no longer require documentation by the OBRC.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* North Only, Except also in South from 1991-1997 (1/27)

1991 - one, 8 July, Horse Lake, *Bruce* (Bob Arthurs, also found by Sara Arthurs, Claire Arthurs, Carol Watson).

Sightings in southern Ontario after 31 December 1997 (or before 1 January 1991) no longer require documentation by the OBRC.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* (7/30)

1998 - one, second or definitve alternate, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Gavin Edmondstone, also found by Susan Edwards).
- one, first basic/first alternate, 17-18 May, Dundas Marsh, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (David Moffat).

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* (2/20)

1998 - one, alternate, 15 August, Long Point (Gravelly Bay), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Lucas Foerster) - photo on file.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (2/27)

1997 - one, 28-31 May, Wiarton, *Bruce* (Edward Cheskey, found by Alan W. McTavish, Donald Fletcher).

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* (2/18)

1998 - one, 5 April, Harrow, *Essex* (Fred J. Urie).
- one, 10 April, Willowdale, *Toronto* (Norman C. Murr).
- one, 9 September, Richmond Hill, *York* (Norman C. Murr).

Three records in 1998 amount to a banner year for this species in Ontario.

Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* South Only, Before 1998 Only (2/55)

1997/98 - two, definitve basic, 29 November 1997 - 22 February 1998, Queenston, *Niagara*

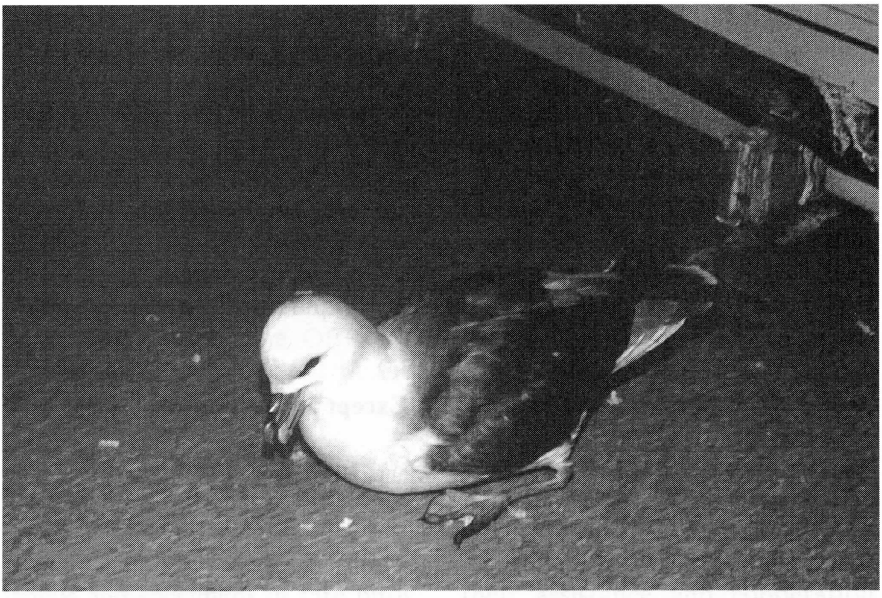

Figure 2: Light morph Northern Fulmar found at Limoges, *Prescott and Russell,* on 14 December 1994. Photo by *Bruce M. Di Labio.*

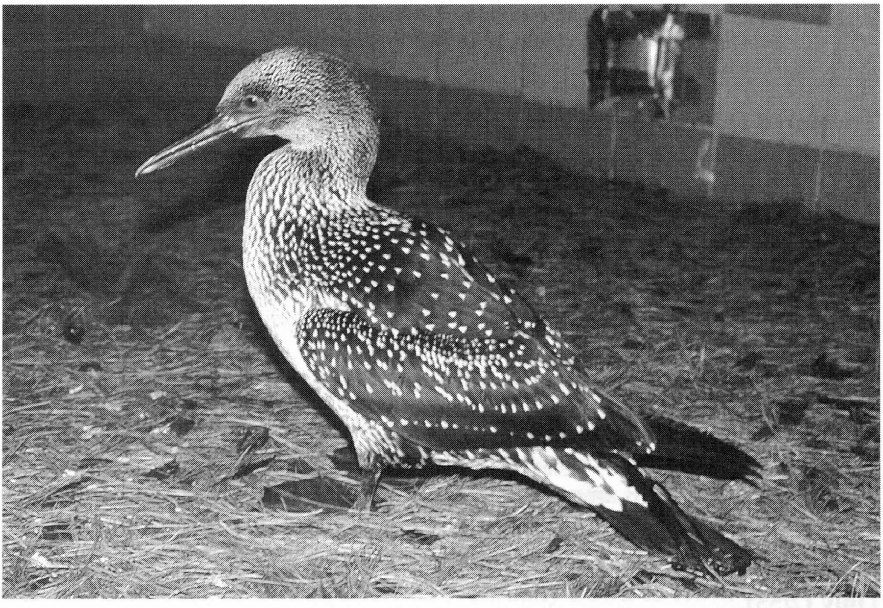

Figure 3: Juvenal Northern Gannet found at Pakenham, *Lanark*, on 12 November 1996. Photo by *Bruce M. Di Labio.*

(Michael Morgante, Cathy A. Sanderson, Gordon Bellerby).

1997 - two, 2-3 April, Edenvale, *Simcoe* (James Forrest, found by Alex Mills) - photos on file.
- one, definitive basic, *frontalis*, 28 September - 19 October, Unionville, *York* (Gerald Frechette, Winnie Yung) - photos on file.
- one, definitive basic, 16-21 November, Aylmer Wildlife Management Area, *Elgin* (David A. Martin, Marvin S. Smout, also found by Linda Wladarski).

1996 - one, definitive basic, 24 March, Peterborough, *Peterborough* (Raymond Geras, also found by Terrie Smith).

Subspecies determination is not stated for most records, except when supported by clear photographs. The OBRC no longer requires documentation for records occurring after 31 December 1997.

Ross's Goose *Chen rossii* South Only (0/20)

1998 - one, definitive basic, white morph, 16 November, Presqu'ile Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (Donald Shanahan).
- one, definitive basic, white morph, 22-23 November, West Lorne, *Elgin* (Harold L. Lancaster, Ann White, also found by Chris Leys, William Prieksaitis, Marjorie Prieksaitis, George Prieksaitis) - photos on file.

1997 - one, definitive basic, white morph, 7 November - 22 December, Ajax and Whitby, *Durham* (Margaret J.C. Bain, found by J. Murray Speirs).

Despite the above records, spring occurrences outnumber fall records in southern Ontario by about two to one.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* North Only (0/7)

1998 - two, definitive basic, *circa* mid-July, Manitouwadge (Wabikoba Lake), *Thunder Bay* (Brian Robilliard, found by Marlene Turner) -photo on file.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* North Only, After 1993 (3/61)

1992 - one, alternate, male, 9 April, Shallow Lake, *Grey* (Peter D. Middleton).

1981 - one, alternate, male, 25-*circa* 27 April, Jackson, *Grey* (Joseph W. Johnson).

The OBRC no longer requires documentation for records in southern Ontario after 31 December 1993; however, this is still a Review List species for northern Ontario.

"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca crecca* (*/2)

1998 - one, alternate, male, 29 March, Vinemount, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Kevin A. McLaughlin).

The Eurasian form of Green-winged Teal, formerly considered a separate species, the "Common Teal", is casual in eastern North America including Ontario (AOU 1998). A population which breeds in the western Aleutian Islands of Alaska, considered by some earlier authorities to be a separate subspecies (*A.c. nimia*), is identical in appearance to *A.c. crecca*, other than being slightly larger, and may thus be impossible to differentiate in the field (Bellrose 1976, Madge and Burn 1988).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (1/22)

1998 - one, definitive alternate, male, 11-19 January, Selkirk Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (John B. Miles).

Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* South Only (2/12)

1997/98 - one, first basic/first alternate, male, 1 December 1997 - 10 January 1998, Barrie (Kempenfelt Bay, Lake Simcoe), *Simcoe* (Winnie Yung, James R. Macey, James Forrest, found by Alex Mills) - photos on file.

Despite the photographic evidence, subspecies identification was not assigned by OBRC.

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* (5/14)

1998 - one, 15 May, Arner and Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (John Schmelefske, Lorraine Foott, Chantal Belair, also found by Michael Jaber).
- one, 3 June, St. Williams Forestry Station, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Mary Ellen Hebb).

1997 - one, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Craig S.A. McLauchlan, also found by Barnaby Southgate).

The bird on 3 June provides the latest accepted record for Ontario and first outside the month of May. See Wormington (1993) for a summary of occurrences of this species in Ontario.

Figure 4: First basic/first alternate male Common Eider at Barrie (Kempenfelt Bay, Lake Simcoe), *Simcoe*, from 1 December 1997 - 10 January 1998. Photo by *Winnie Yung*.

Gyrfalcon *Falco rusticolus* South Only, Before 1994 (4/33)

1992 - one, definitive basic, gray morph, 5 January, Mar, *Bruce* (Mark Wiercinski).
- one, white morph, 23 January, Cape Chin, *Bruce* (Scott Connop) - photo on file.

1983 - one, juvenal, dark morph, 5 November, Big Bay, *Grey* (Bob Gray, found by Bill Loney, Dawn Loney) - photo on file.

Occurrences of this species after 31 December 1993 no longer require documentation by the OBRC. The circumstances surrounding the bird on 5 November 1983 are interesting. It was found attacking a barnyard duck, and was easily captured since it was covered with mud from the struggle. It was kept overnight in a coop, and after having preened itself clean, was released unharmed the following day (Gray 1984).

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* South Only (1/37)

1994 - one, alternate, 15 July, Kettle Point, *Lambton* (Alfred H. Rider) - photo on file.

1991 - one, alternate, 31 May, Sauble Beach, *Bruce* (Dennis Lewington, also found by Gwen Lewington).

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* (2/8)

1998 - one, alternate, 26 May, Bath, *Lennox and Addington* (Glenn Barrett, also found by Cynthia Pekarik, Jeremy Rouse, Ross Neureuther).
- one, alternate, female, 31 May - 1 June, Toronto (Leslie Street Spit), *Toronto* (Larry A. Morse, Roy B.H. Smith, John Schmelefske) - photos on file.

Although some may speculate that the same individual was involved in these two records, they are considered to be separate records by the OBRC. There is certainly precedence for multiple individuals of Black-necked Stilt occurring in Ontario at the same time: three birds at Mitchell, *Perth*, on 19 May 1991 (Bain 1992); singles at Stoney Point, *Essex*, from 28 May - 16 June 1989 and at North Bay, *Nipissing*, from 12-23 June 1989 (Wormington and Curry 1990); and two at Sable Island, *Rainy River*, on 7 June 1981 (James 1983).

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* (7/53)

1998 - five, alternate, 14 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex* (John Carley, also found by Victoria Carley, Georgia Carley, Robert Carley).
- one, juvenal, male, 23 August, Hamilton Harbour (Windermere Basin), *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos, found by William F. Smith, James Cram, Phill Walker).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* (0/18)

1994 - one, alternate, August (date unknown), Grand Bend, *Lambton* (Alfred H. Rider) - photo on file.

The exact dates of occurrence for this record are undetermined. It is interesting to note that a male and female Curlew Sandpiper were present at this site during May 1994 (Pittaway 1995b).

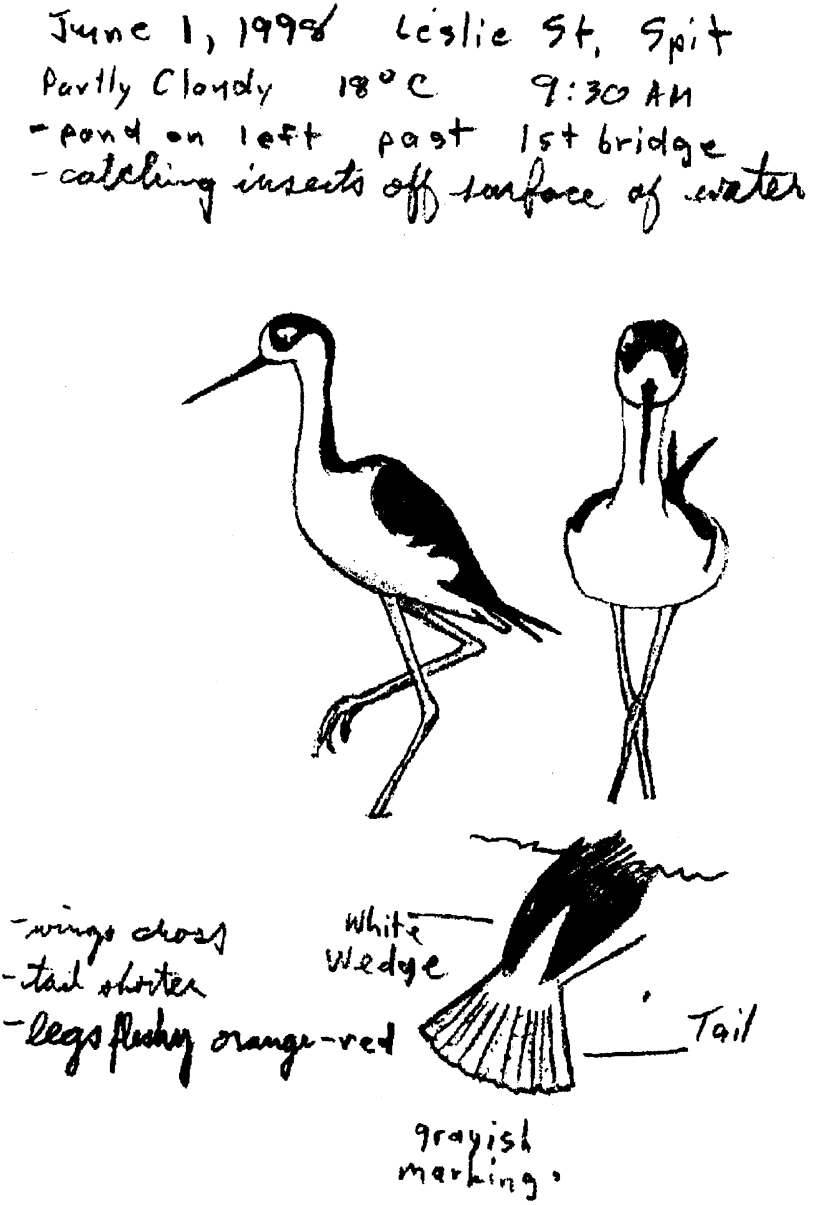

Figure 5: Female Black-necked Stilt at Toronto's Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, from 31 May - 1 June 1998. Sketch by *John Schmelefske*.

Mew Gull *Larus canus* (3/12)

1997 - one, definitive basic, 27 September, Blenheim, *Kent* (James P. Coey, David J. Milsom, also found by Maxine Myslowska).

California Gull *Larus californicus* (0/21)

1998 - one, definitive basic, 26-28 January, Toronto (Sunnyside Beach), *Toronto* (Robert K. Yukich).

1997/98 - one, definitive basic, 23 November 1997 - 2 February 1998, Queenston, *Niagara* (William C. D'Anna, Gordon Bellerby, also found by Betsy Potter).

1997 - one, definitive basic, 30 November, Chippawa, *Niagara* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, also found by Barbara N. Charlton, Robert Z. Dobos, William G. Lamond).

It is considered that at least two individuals were present at the Niagara River during late fall and winter of 1997-98. None of these birds could definitely be ascribed to either of the suggested subspecies described by Jehl (1987), those being a smaller, darker-mantled race (*L.c. californicus*) that breeds in the Great Basin states, and a larger, lighter-mantled race (*L.c. albertaensis*) from the Great Plains of northcentral United States and southcentral Canada.

Thick-billed Murre *Uria lomvia* (0/2)

1998 - one, definitive basic, 29 November, Burlington Ship Canal, *Hamilton-Wentworth/Halton* (Robert M. Sachs, Sheila Bowslaugh, Carl J. Rothfels, also found by Eleanor Sachs).

This well-described bird unfortunately did not linger long enough to be seen by any other than the discovering party. This is only the second record for Ontario since 1953, the other occurring on 5-6 December 1995 at Ottawa, *Ottawa-Carleton* (Dobos 1997).

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (0/3)

1998 - one, 21 May, Pelee Island (Scudder), *Essex* (Robert Tymstra) - video on file.

- one, male, 24 June, Burlington, *Halton* (John G. Keenleyside).

1993 - one, 25 July and 4 September, Pittock Lake, *Oxford* (James M. Holdsworth).

These constitute the first three records for Ontario, and apparently for Canada as well. The 1993 record had been previously considered by the OBRC but had been placed in the "deferred" category (identification accepted, wild status deferred) pending additional information on its occurrence. With the acceptance of the two recent 1998 records, the Committee has moved the 1993 record from the "deferred" category to the "accepted" list.

The Eurasian Collared-Dove is a Palearctic species which had first become established within North America in Florida by the mid-1980s via introductions to the Bahamas (Smith 1987), from which it has steadily expanded north and west into the continent. It was accepted by the American Birding Association's Checklist Committee in 1992

(DeBenedictis 1994a). Its spread has apparently been more rapid through the centre of the continent than up the eastern seaboard. By the spring of 1998, it had been recorded as a breeder in Texas, Arkansas and Nebraska, and there were occurrences in Kansas, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Montana, as well as the first reports for Minnesota and Wisconsin (Wamer 1998). Thus, the Ontario records certainly fit with this pattern of expansion.

The Eurasian Collared-Dove closely resembles the Ringed Turtle-Dove (*S. "risoria"*), which is actually a totally domestic bird that does not occur anywhere naturally, although feral populations exist (DeBenedictis 1994b). Eurasians are generally larger birds with darker primaries and gray undertail coverts, with quite different vocalizations. For additional identification information, see Smith (1987) and Blackshaw (1988). Birders should carefully examine any "collared" doves encountered, since it seems only a matter of time before this species will become a regular feature of our Ontario avifauna.

Hummingbird species *Selasphorus* sp. (0/7)

1997 - one, male, 4-27 July, Lakefield, *Peterborough* (Nancy Hanes).
- one, first basic, male, *circa* early-November - 24 December (at least), Owen Sound, *Grey* (William Waterton, found by Vern Anschuetz, Dorothea Anschuetz) - photos on file.

The July 4 date for the bird at Lakefield provides the earliest date amongst the 18 accepted records of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds in Ontario. The OBRC takes a conservative approach towards reports of assumed Rufous Hummingbirds (*S. rufus*). With the apparent increase in occurrences of other western hummingbird species in eastern North America in recent years during fall and winter, which has included a number of Allen's Hummingbirds (*S. sasin*) (see Boyle et al. 1998, Hall 1998, West 1998), Ontario reports of *Selasphorus* must clearly exclude Allen's to be accepted as Rufous. Typically, in-hand measurements are needed in order to separate females or immatures of these two species (Heidcamp 1997).

Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii* North Only (1/1)

1998 - three, alternate, males, 29 May - 1 June, Rainy River, *Rainy River* (David H. Elder, Donald S. Graham).

These birds were heard singing on breeding territory.

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* (1/4)

1998 - one, 22-24 September, Toronto (Mount Pleasant Cemetery), *Toronto* (A. Geoffrey Carpentier, James Griffith, E. Gail Worth, also found by Wanda Michalowicz).

The Committee has accepted this record as an Ash-throated, although it was recognized that the descriptions did not rule out the possibility of the

bird being a Nutting's Flycatcher (*M. nuttingi*). Nutting's, a Mexican and Central American species, has recently been documented in Arizona (Benesh and Rosenberg 1998), and for future occurrences of extralimital *Myiarchus* flycatchers in Ontario, Nutting's (although a remote possibility) will need to be considered. Readers are referred to Dickinson (1999), Kaufman (1998) and Howell and Webb (1995) for identification criteria for Nutting's Flycatcher.

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus/couchii* (0/1)

1998 - one, 27 September, Hurkett, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott).

This is the first record of this "species group" for Ontario. Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds are very similar in appearance, and are likely only safely separated in the field by voice (Mlodinow 1998). This bird at Hurkett did not vocalize, thus the Committee decided not to assign the bird to either species. As a result, we have the unusual situation of a new addition to the Ontario checklist based on a species-pair group. The Tropical Kingbird, a tropical species that breeds north to southeastern Arizona, regularly occurs as a rare fall northbound migrant along the Pacific coastal states and British Columbia, but has also occurred in the east to as far as Maine, Quebec and Michigan (Mlodinow 1998). Couch's Kingbird is resident to southern Texas, and extralimital records are mainly from the eastern Gulf Coast states. Several unidentified Tropical/Couch's have also been recorded from as far as Nova Scotia and Maine (Mlodinow 1998). This information suggests that Tropical Kingbird seems more likely to wander; however, probability of occurrence cannot be used to clinch the identification between these two species.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* (3/37)

1998 - one, alternate, 2 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Graeme C. Gibson, also found by Daniel G. Derbyshire, Warwick E. Redway, Cole Snell, Nancy Parish) - photo on file.

1991 - one, definitive basic, male, 22 November, Tobermory, *Bruce* (Mark Wiercinski, John Francis, found by George Harpur) - photo on file.

The Tobermory bird on November 22 is the latest accepted fall record for Ontario.

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* (0/2)

1998 - one, 7-9 December, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, Jerry H. Guild, James N. Flynn, also found by Fred J. Urie)- photos on file.

This is the second record for Ontario. The first, also found by Wormington at Point Pelee, was on 21 April 1989 (Wormington and Curry 1990).

Despite the contention that this bird was of the subspecies *pelodoma* from the southwestern United States and Mexico (Wormington 1999), the OBRC has not assigned a subspecies for this record. The same is true for the 1989 Pelee record, which was also stated to belong to the subspecies *pelodoma* (Wormington 1992), but which was also not assigned subspecific determination by the OBRC (Wormington and Curry 1990).

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* (0/14)

1998 - one, basic, 2 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Graeme C. Gibson, Daniel G. Derbyshire, also found by Cole Snell, Warwick E. Redway, Nancy Parish) - photo on file.

This is the first record for northern Ontario. The bird was captured and banded by the Thunder Cape Bird Observatory.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea* North Only (2/10)

1998 - one, male, 16-18 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Graeme C. Gibson, also found by Daniel G. Derbyshire).

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides* (3/21)

1998 - one, basic, male, 5 April and 9 July, McGinnis Creek, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms).
- one, basic, female, 21-22 October, Atikokan, *Rainy River* (Donald S. Graham).

1979 - one, basic, 20-22 December, Wiarton, *Bruce* (Joseph W. Johnson, Martin Parker).

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi* (4/26)

1994 - one, 5-8 November, Pinery Provincial Park, *Lambton* (Alfred H. Rider) - photo on file.

Varied Thrush *Ixoreus naevius* Before 1994 Only for South, and Before 1998 Only for North (5/53)

1997 - one, basic, male, 16 November, Stratton, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms).

1991 - one, basic, male, 6 December, Shallow Lake, *Grey* (Barbara Fidler).

The OBRC no longer requires documentation for records in the south after 31 December 1993 or for records in the north after 31 December 1997.

Sprague's Pipit *Anthus spragueii* (0/2)

1998 - one, 29 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Graeme C. Gibson, also found by Daniel G. Derbyshire, Warwick E. Redway, Cole Snell) - photo on file.

All three Ontario records have been from the north, the two previous being at Rainy River on 2-12 June 1990 (Curry 1991) and 3-12 July 1980 (James 1991). The latter record has yet to be reviewed by OBRC.

Figure 6: Bewick's Wren captured and banded at Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*, on 2 May 1998. Photo by *Daniel G. Derbyshire.*

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus* North Only (1/3)

1998 - one, definitive alternate, male, 13 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Graeme C. Gibson, also found by Daniel G. Derbyshire, Warwick E. Redway) - photo on file.

This bird was captured and banded by the Thunder Cape Bird Observatory.

"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler *Dendroica coronata memorabilis/ auduboni* (*/5)

1998 - one, alternate, male, 23 April, Etobicoke, *Toronto* (Alfred L. Adamo).
1997 - one, basic, 3 October, Toronto Island, *Toronto* (Robert K. Yukich).

Kirtland's Warbler *Dendroica kirtlandii* (7/15)

1998 - one, alternate, 15 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Frederick Longabaugh, also found by Nancy Longabaugh).
- one, alternate, 21 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Martin J. Taylor, also found by Dixie Taylor).

1997 - one, definitive alternate, male, 13-14 May, Delaware (Cedarcroft Property), *Middlesex* (Jean H. Griffin, Patricia Cole, Joanne Ewart) - photos on file.

Figure 7: Definitive alternate male Blue-winged Warbler captured and banded at Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*, on 13 May 1998. Photo by *Graeme C. Gibson*.

Prairie Warbler *Dendroica discolor* North Only (0/2)

1998 - one, alternate, male, 27 May, Atikokan (Lower Steep Rock Lake), *Rainy River* (Donald S. Graham).

See Dobos (1996) for a discussion of previous northern Ontario records.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* (1/9)

1998 - one, first basic, male, *montanus/arcticus*, 19 January - 14 April, Harmony, *Perth* (Thomas Hayman, found by Isabel Huber, Magnus Huber) - photo on file.
- one, male, 7 May, Etobicoke (Humber Bay Park East), *Toronto* (Naish McHugh).

1976 - one, basic, female, *montanus*, 4-12 December, Rosehill, *Niagara* (Harold H. Axtell, Alan Wormington, Robert G. Finlayson) - photos on file.

The Harmony and Rosehill birds were determined to be subspecies of the "interior complex" based on the large extent of white spotting on the upperparts and white on the underside of the rectrices. See Dickinson (1999) and Rising (1996) for information on subspecific identification of Spotted Towhees.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* (5/43)

1998 - one, 20 April, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (R. Douglas Smith).

"Pink-sided" Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis mearnsi* (0/1)

1997/98 - one, 31 December 1997 - 14 April 1998, Belmont, *Elgin* (David A. Martin) - photo on file.

This is the first record of this subspecies for Ontario documented by photograph. James (1991) stated that there were no specimen records, although there were claimed sight records for the province. Pittaway (1993) cautioned that most reports of this form in the east may be of pale female "Oregon" Juncos (*J.h. oreganus* group).

Blue Grosbeak *Guiraca caerulea* (7/35)

1998 - one, basic, male, 14 May, Toronto Island, *Toronto* (Larry A. Morse).
- one, first basic, male, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (William G. Lindley, also found by Colleen Lindley).
- one, basic, male, 18 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Henry H. Green).
- one, basic, male, 30 May, Essonville, *Haliburton* (Naish McHugh).

Figure 8: First basic male Spotted Towhee at Harmony, *Perth*, from 19 January - 14 April 1998. Photo by *Thomas Hayman*.

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* (2/7)

1998 - one, definitive alternate, male, 15 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Daniel G. Derbyshire, Graeme C. Gibson, also found by Warwick E. Redway, Cole Snell) - photos on file.

This bird, the second for northern Ontario, was captured and banded by Thunder Cape Bird Observatory.

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii* (3/2)

1997 - one, first alternate, male, 22 May, Port Ryerse, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (James R. Macey, Sean Macey).

Although the OBRC had decided to defer decisions on future records of

Figure 9: Definitive alternate male Painted Bunting captured and banded at Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*, on 15 May 1998. Photo by *Graeme C. Gibson*.

Bullock's Orioles due to uncertainty over identification criteria between Bullock's and Baltimore Orioles (*I. galbula*) (Dobos 1998), the problem involves females and first basic males of these species. The facial and tail patterns of this nicely described bird clearly established it as a Bullock's.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch *Leucosticte tephrocotis* (1/6)

1997 - one, *littoralis*, 3-4 November, Stepstone, *Thunder Bay* (Cathy Kivi) - photo on file.

The largely gray cheek of this bird places it in the "Hepburn's" race (Pyle 1997).

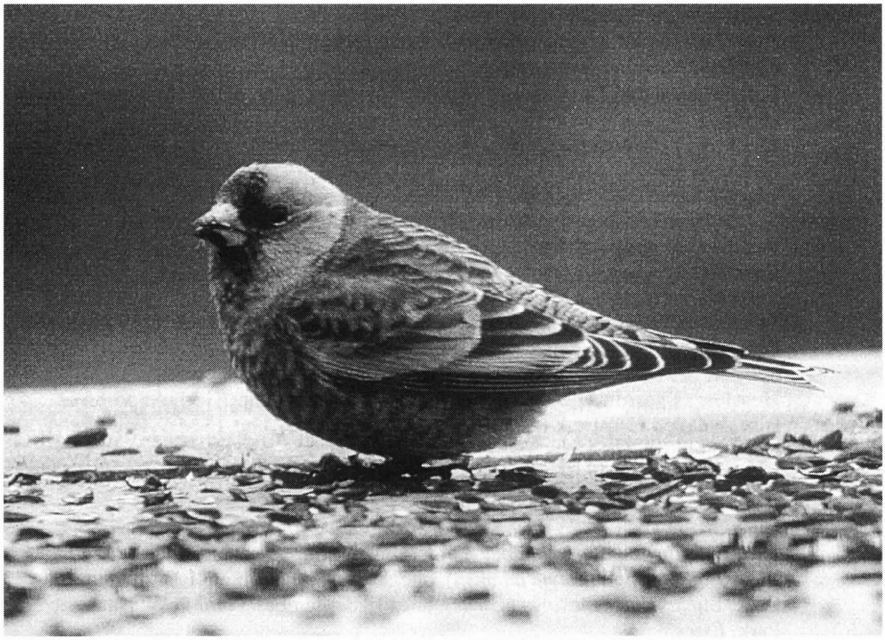

Figure 10: Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch of the subspecies *littoralis* at Stepstone, *Thunder Bay*, from 3-4 November 1997. Photo by *Cathy Kivi*.

Not Accepted Records

Identification Uncertain

In most reports listed below, the documentation provided was found to be insufficient to establish the identity of the species claimed. In very few cases did the Committee consider that the identification was actually an

error. Any of these reports may be resubmitted for further review if new supporting evidence is provided.

1998 - Pacific Loon, one, 8 November, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth*.
- Little Blue Heron, one, 19-21 May, Port Dover, *Haldimand-Norfolk*.
- Little Blue Heron, one, 23 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex*.
- Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*), one, 9 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Swallow-tailed Kite, one, 22 July, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*), one, 6 October, Selkirk Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk*.
- "Common" (Mew) Gull (*Larus canus canus*), one, 4 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), one, 24 February, Grand Bend, *Lambton/Huron* - photos on file.
- Eurasian Collared-Dove, one, *circa* September-November, Sarnia, *Lambton* - photos on file.
- Black Swift (*Cypseloides niger*), one, 18 May, Etobicoke (Colonel Samuel Smith Park), *Toronto*.
- Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*), two, 11 May - 3 June, St. Joseph Island (Hilton Beach), *Algoma* - photo on file.
- Rufous Hummingbird, one, 21-22 July, Bass Lake, *Simcoe*.
- Cave Swallow, one, 11 December, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Bewick's Wren, two, 4 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*), one, 15 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Spotted Towhee, one, 18 April, Perth, *Lanark*.
- Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*), one, 7 June, Kirkfield, *Victoria*.
- Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), one, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Blue Grosbeak, one, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Blue Grosbeak, one, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Blue Grosbeak, four, 23 May, Scarborough (Glen Rouge Park), *Toronto*.

1997 - Pacific Loon, one, 10 November - 3 December, Pinery Provincial Park, *Lambton*.
- Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*), one, 13 October, Cotnam Island, *Renfrew*.
- Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*), one, 17 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*), one, 13 October, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, *Essex*.
- Mew Gull, one, 18 November, Nanticoke, *Haldimand-Norfolk*.
- Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*), two, 24 May, Shirley's Bay, *Ottawa-Carleton*.

1995 - Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), one, 5 May, Forest, *Lambton*.

1993 - Mississippi Kite, one, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*), one, 2 September, Kettle Point, *Lambton*.
- Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*), one, 8 September, Thedford, *Lambton*.

1992 - Gyrfalcon, one, 8 January, Clarke's Corners, *Bruce*.

1990 - "Bewick's" Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*), one, *circa* March, Grand Bend, *Lambton* - photo on file.
- Eurasian Collared-Dove, one, found dead, *circa* May, Sarnia, *Lambton* - photos on file.

1988 - Great Skua (*Catharacta skua*), one, 30 October, Kettle Point, *Lambton*.
- Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica)*, one, 11 November - 11 December, Kincardine, *Bruce*.

Not Accepted Records

Identification Accepted, Origin Questionable

Records in this category are those considered by the Committee to be likely escaped birds or birds released from captivity. However, as with all submissions to the OBRC, such records may be reviewed at any time should new information arise suggesting a wild origin.

1998 - Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*), one, 19 May, West Hill, *Toronto* (Mikal H. Lawton)-photos on file.

Birds of this species seen in Ontario are definitely of released or escaped stock. Chukar is native to Eurasia, but introduced populations have become established in western North America; the closest established populations to Ontario are in eastern Montana (AOU 1998).

1997 - Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica*), one, 20 April, Prince Edward Point, *Prince Edward* (M. Elizabeth Kellogg, also found by Brian Joyce, Mark Lowe).

The OBRC has great difficulty judging the wild status of out-of-range Black-billed Magpies, primarily in southern Ontario, and members are typically split on either side of the fence. A similar occurrence at this same location on 6 May 1996 was previously accepted (Dobos 1997). However, a record at Dorchester, *Middlesex*, on 8 October 1991 was similarly not accepted based on origin (Bain 1992).

Updates/Corrections to Previous OBRC Reports

1997 Report (Ontario Birds 16: 51-80)

- under Greater White-fronted Goose, 23-26 September and 9 October 1995, after "found by" delete "Peter Rombouts and Elly Rombouts" and add "Peter Chapman".
- under American Avocet, 23 October - 2 November 1994, change "(Alfred H. Rider)" to "(Alfred H. Rider, also found by Peter Chapman)".
- under Rufous Hummingbird, change bracketed numbering to "(2/9)".
- under Hummingbird species, change bracketed numbering to "(0/5)".
- under Harris's Sparrow, 6-28 January 1995, in brackets add "found by Peter Chapman".

1995 Report (Ontario Birds 14: 50-71)

- under Rufous Hummingbird, change bracketed numbering to "(2/8)".

1994 Report (Ontario Birds 13: 46-65)

- under Curlew Sandpiper, one female, 11-20 May, add "Alfred H. Rider" as a contributor.
- under Rufous Hummingbird, change bracketed numbering to "(2/7)".

1991 Report (Ontario Birds 10: 43-63)

- under Rufous Hummingbird, change bracketed numbering to "(2/5/1)".

1990 Report (Ontario Birds 9: 18-44)

- under Rufous Hummingbird, change bracketed numbering to "(2/4/1)".
- under Hummingbird sp., change bracketed numbering to "(0/3/1)".

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Yellow-throated and Blue-headed Vireos in Ontario: 6. Interspecific Interactions, Maintenance Activities, and Molt

Ross D. James

In this final article in the series, the reader may assume once again that the lives of the Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*) and the Blue-headed Vireo (*V. solitarius*), formerly Solitary Vireo, are similar unless otherwise noted.

INTERSPECIFIC INTERACTIONS

Other Vireos

The Yellow-throated Vireo did not respond to the songs of either Red-eyed (*V. olivaceus*) or Warbling (*V. gilvus*) Vireos (James 1968), two other vireo species regularly associated in southern Ontario. Yellow-throated Vireos only chased these other species if they ventured too close to a nest. I saw Warbling or Red-eyed Vireos singing within 20 m of a Yellow-throated Vireo nest and remain unchallenged. On two occasions, I have encountered Warbling Vireos nesting within 15 m of a Yellow-throated Vireo and once a Red-eyed Vireo nest within 25 m, and there was no animosity unless one got too close to the other's nest. After the young leave the nest, I saw family groups of two species foraging together without conflict.

The only other vireo I saw in the same habitat with the Blue-headed Vireo in Ontario was the Red-eyed Vireo. The latter tended to occupy different parts of the forest, remaining more in pure deciduous growth. Some close contact, however, does occur. I saw the two species foraging within a few metres of each other in the same tree with no animosity. Again, they chased each other only if one ventured too close to the other's nest.

In Ontario, because of different distributions, Blue-headed and Yellow-throated Vireos are unlikely to come into contact on nesting territories, and I never observed any interactions. They were not responsive to playback of each other's song here. In western Pennsylvania, where they occurred closer together and might be found nesting close together, there was also little or no reaction by either species to tape recordings of the other's song, so I would not expect any greater conflict there.

Most Other Smaller Birds

I saw Yellow-throated and Blue-headed Vireos chasing many other small birds, including warblers, flycatchers, chickadees, nuthatches, waxwings, orioles, robins, grosbeaks, sparrows, woodpeckers, and blackbirds. Any bird would be chased

when near a nest. Smaller birds like warblers were chased directly, and left immediately. Some of the larger birds, like kingbirds or flickers, may have left only when they had been harassed enough; the vireos dove down from above, and gave a bill snap or a quick short *spat* sound right above the intruder's head.

I saw unmated Yellow-throated Vireos tolerate Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*) and Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) at close range, until there were eggs or young in a nest, and then they would be chased 25 to 30 m from a nest tree. When young birds were out of the nest, these blackbirds were still chased for as long as two weeks after the young had left the nest.

Small flycatchers, warblers and other birds in turn chased the vireos should they come too close to the other species' nests. The vireos fled, but only for a short distance, enough to avoid further conflict.

Hawks, Crows, Jays and Owls

I have observed only one encounter between a large *Buteo* hawk and a Yellow-throated Vireo. In this instance, the vireo left a nest, and with a number of other small birds, mobbed the hawk as it flew off. Cooper's Hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*) have been known to kill these vireos (Hammerstrom and Hammerstrom 1951), but the vireos have also been known to nest in close association with them (Bent 1950).

The only hawk I have observed in the vicinity of Blue-headed Vireo nests was the Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*). One vireo nest was built within 60 m of an occupied broadwing nest. In the half dozen times I saw the hawk land relatively close to the vireos, I never saw them attempt to chase it, even when a robin (*Turdus migratorius*) noisily attacked one. The vireos would continue to build the nest as long as the hawk remained some distance away.

When there were eggs or young in the nest, the vireos were more easily alarmed, but not so much at the hawk itself. When a hawk started to scream, it was screaming at me. This in turn got the vireos alarmed. One day, I had been sitting at a vireo nest for half an hour before the hawk began screaming. The vireos only then began scolding me. As soon as I moved away, they stopped scolding, even though the hawk was still screaming. In another instance with a screaming hawk, the female vireo would not get off a nest when the male came to exchange places, and the male fell silent, until the hawk moved away. The vireos probably have little reason to be concerned about Broad-winged Hawks. However, I have seen the remains of young birds (not vireos) in broadwing nests.

Bowles (1895) indicated that he commonly found Blue-headed Vireo nests in association with Cooper's Hawks. Bent (1950)

reported similar experiences, and found that the hawks did not molest the vireos. Forbush (1929) stated that the Blue-headed Vireo has been found in woods with Northern Goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*), Red-tailed (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and Sharp-shinned Hawks (*A. striatus*). Simpson (1914) reported an undisturbed nest directly under a goshawk nest. An alert, healthy pair of vireos probably need have little concern about larger hawks, at least.

I saw only Yellow-throated Vireos bothered by American Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*). The crows were usually not attacked, but the vireos perched near and uttered a constant stream of loud scolding calls until the crow left. Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) were attacked with great vigour by either species the moment they appeared anywhere near a nest. They were chased for 50 to 100 m from a nest. Jays are obviously recognized as predators.

Van Camp and Mayfield (1943) reported the remains of a Yellow-throated Vireo in a Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) nest. I have never witnessed an encounter between an owl and a living vireo. Owls no doubt occasionally take vireos, but may be a relatively minor cause of mortality in nesting areas.

Cowbirds

Yellow-throated Vireos invariably reacted to the presence of a Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) at any stage of nesting, from building through fledging. If a cowbird suddenly landed somewhere near a nest, the vireos might "freeze" to avoid being seen. More often, they gave high intensity alarm calls. *Alarm calls* are high pitched pure tone calls that are more difficult to locate, and are given usually when the bird is concealed at least partly, and motionless; as opposed to *scolding calls* which are noisy, easily located, and the birds are usually conspicuous, and attacking the object of the scolding.

Cowbirds were usually chased with scolding calls after an initial alarm, or when the vireos could move without revealing a nest. Cowbirds were chased by Yellow-throated Vireos even when there were young in the nest. I did not observe the response of a Blue-headed Vireo to a cowbird.

People

I have indicated the extreme sensitivity to people at the time of pairing (James 1996). On the first day or two of nest building also, I have moved at the wrong time, revealing my presence, and have heard high intensity alarm calls, indicating that they perceived a considerable threat. On occasion, this might have caused them to abandon a nest and start elsewhere. In later building, as long as I remained unobtrusive, there was usually not much indication of alarm. They may have given a low intensity alarm call as I approached,

particularly the first time I moved in close enough to watch.

But, once eggs were laid, reactions were usually fairly mild, although they varied greatly depending on the pair of birds involved. Most just sat quietly on the nest even when approached fairly closely. One pair of Yellow-throated Vireos nested in a parking lot, paying no attention to cars and people below. Through incubation and brooding stage, most reacted somewhat more strongly the first time I approached a nest, and much more mildly thereafter. But, once off the nest, they usually flew about giving scolding calls.

I encountered one female in each of these two species that did not leave a nest until I took a wing tip and gently lifted her from her eggs. They clung to the nest briefly, but then flew off and scolded mildly. One female Yellow-throated Vireo allowed me to stand in the tree about 1.5 m away while she brooded and came to feed the young.

However, once young were no longer brooded, the parents again seemed much more agitated by people (and other predators). I was scolded when 30 m from one nest tree, where previously I was ignored below the nest. I was scolded while just walking down a road, by a male with a young long out of the nest and well able to fly. I watched one pair of Yellow-throated Vireos over many days through the nesting period in a nest right over a gravel road. But, on one day when they had 10 day old young, I had been sitting in a car watching for some time. And as soon as I began to open the door to get out, I heard them give high intensity alarm calls. I had never heard them give this call before.

In general, Blue-headed Vireos gave a milder response to my presence, and seldom did one ever dive at my head and snap its beak as many Yellow-throated Vireos did. However, there was considerable variation in the response of any pair of either species. Blue-headed Vireos usually only scolded mildly when roused from a nest, and some made no sound at all. But, I had one female that refused to leave a nest and eggs for over an hour, although the male came several times, as she was aware of my presence some distance away. And once, the first time I approached a nest with older young, a pair gave high intensity alarm calls.

Other Species

These vireos seemed to recognize squirrels as predators. A passing Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) caused a pair of Blue-headed Vireos to "freeze" and remain silent. I saw Blue-headed Vireos actively chase Red Squirrels, and Yellow-throated Vireos chase Gray Squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) that approached a nest area.

I have observed blackflies (*Simulium* sp.) flying about the

heads of incubating Blue-headed Vireos. They probably suffer some from the presence of these flies, as do their observers!

MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

Bill Wiping

One of the most obvious activities of both species was drawing the beak from the base to the tip, on alternate sides, up the side of the branch on which they were perched. This was seen several times after catching and eating food. Even young, two days out of the nest, did it. It serves to remove foreign matter from the beak to keep it clean. Bill wiping can also sometimes be seen after preening. Large items adhering to the beak will be dispelled by just rapidly turning the head and flicking the bill from side to side.

Preening

Preening the body feathers was a commonly seen activity among adults as well as young of both species. In July, before molting, I saw adults preening as many as three times an hour, standing for five to twenty minutes each time. During preening, body feathers were typically raised somewhat. The bird put its beak into the feathers at the base of the tail (to get oil from the uropygeal gland) for a few seconds before preening. They worked mainly with the beak (not by rubbing their whole head over the body), working it among the feathers or drawing the long wing and tail feathers from the base to the tip through the bill. The birds often closed their eyes as they preened. The head was frequently scratched with one or the other foot. Always, the wing was lowered and the foot brought forward over the wing to reach the head (in both species).

Stretching usually accompanied preening. Here the wings were partially spread and raised over the back until they touched or almost so, and then were slowly relaxed. Or, one leg was extended back and to one side, and the corresponding wing drooped and pushed out along the leg until fully extended, then slowly relaxed. When a preening bout was over, the bird would ruffle all its feathers, shake itself, and then relax its feathers back into place. I saw what appeared to be a yawn on only a few occasions.

Sunning

These vireos usually chose a perch in the sun to preen. Accompanying preening, I several times observed sunning (see Figure 1). The bird usually turned one side to the sun, and then rotated its body slightly, turning that side up toward the sun. The body feathers were ruffled and the tail fanned. The wing opposite the sunny side was generally drooped and placed against the perch to support them. The wing toward the sun was partially spread over the back or the side. The neck

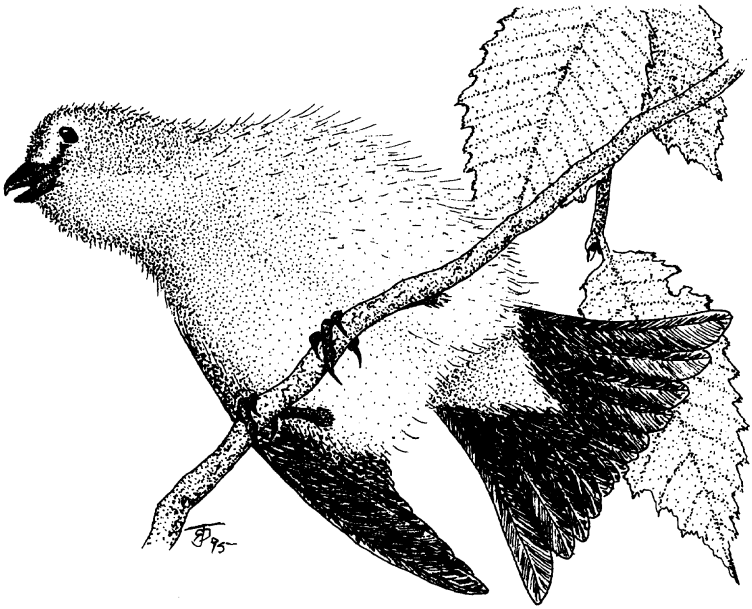

Figure 1: Drawn from a slide of a Yellow-throated Vireo sunning. The sun is shining from the upper right, and the bird has turned its left side to the sun. Drawing by *Ross D. James*.

was stretched out. The bird was silent although the beak was usually held open, probably to facilitate heat escape. Sometimes they would stand with the back to the sun, again with all body feathers ruffled and tail fanned, but wings folded or nearly so.

I never saw anting, and Simmons (1957) indicated that none of the vireos were known to exhibit that behaviour.

Bathing

I never actually observed bathing by either species, but once saw a Yellow-throated Vireo fly up from a river edge on a sunny day, where there were no shrubs in which it could have been perched. It had water dripping from it and looked very wet. After shaking, it proceeded to preen.

I have also observed similar shaking of ruffled wet-looking feathers by a Yellow-throated Vireo after a rain. Rain bathing could be a more usual means of bathing in these vireos. Bassett (1926) described bathing in Cassin's Vireo (*V. cassinii*) over a swimming pool. The bird apparently flew over the water, "dipping" on the wing.

Parasites

I have found several Yellow-throated Vireo nests with northern fowl mites (*Ornithoryssus sylvarium*).

When seen, they usually occur in profusion. I watched one female stand over the nest, and pick at her legs and feet as well as at the nest and supporting branch, to pick off these tiny mites. I never felt these were the cause of any mortality. Some have reported "parasites" so numerous as to kill the young or drive away the parents (Clark 1890, Maxon 1902). They gave no indication of what the parasites were, although one called them "lice".

I have never observed mites on a Blue-headed Vireo nest, but Weygandt (1907) reported "lice" on a nest at a more southern latitude. In northern parts of their range, external parasites do not seem to be much of a problem.

MOLT

Young grow their first set of feathers while in the nest, and look much like adults upon leaving the nest. Tail, and probably most, feathers complete their growth after nest leaving. Within a couple of weeks of nest departure, young begin another partial molt of body feathers and wing coverts. The hatch year birds then undergo a complete molt of body feathers, but not the larger wing and tail feathers, in late summer at the same time as adults undergo a complete molt of all feathers. Somewhere between the partial and the complete body molts, the young also seem to lose at least some outer tail feathers. Young are then almost indistinguishable from adults. For further details, see Rodewald and James (1996) and James (1998).

Adults begin to lose large flight feathers about mid-July, only a few at a time. Then by early August become very quiet, secretive and unresponsive to tape recorded song. They tend to remain high in forest trees. Within about ten days, adults have a short new tail growing in, or only a couple of feathers (the outer) may remain, and body feathers still look very ragged. But, after about two weeks, the plumage looks much newer, although feathers are probably not fully grown (the tail obviously is not). It takes another week or so for feathering to look new. Larger wing feathers are also usually replaced by the end of August. Some birds may molt later than others, particularly the Blue-headed Vireos that may be several weeks behind. A few body feathers may still be growing in during the autumn migration.

Bent (1950) indicates that the Blue-headed Vireo may undergo a partial irregular molt in the spring. Sutton and Pettingill (1942) reported molting specimens from Mexico in March, and there are several molting specimens in the Canadian Museum of Nature taken in winter. Yellow-throated Vireos also undergo a partial spring molt (Rodewald and James 1996). The extent of these molts is unknown, and they may even be irregular.

Discussion

As formerly discussed (James 1997), Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos seem to reduce competition when occupying the same habitats by occupying different levels of the forest, and the Yellow-throated Vireo seems to nest higher where the two co-occur (Williamson 1971, James 1979). Yet one sees virtually no interspecific aggression when the two are seen together, and they do not respond to each other's songs. This seems somewhat contradictory.

However, it is possible that there is more than meets the eye, and that avoidance may be particularly significant on a few days at the very beginning of the season when territories are being established by the males. Each species may wish to reduce the level of contact with another species likely to be moving through the same spaces during the subsequent nesting period. Neither tolerate any other species close to a nest site, and the chances of increased conflict close to nesting sites is likely to be greatest among closely related species, going similar places in a habitat.

Even the presence of another species, and obviously its territorial song, could be enough to induce two species to move somewhat apart, without physical contact. This scenario is supported by several examples of habitat co-occupancy in the genus *Vireo*, where different species choose different levels of the habitat (Hamilton 1962) or maintain mutually exclusive territories, relying on song to effect spacing while avoiding physical encounters (Barlow et al. 1970, Rice 1978). The fact that Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos are still able to occupy the same habitat suggests that the avoidance is as much one of reducing conflict with another species as specifically another vireo.

As previously indicated (James 1997), Blue-headed and Yellow-throated Vireos have probably diverged in nesting height during a former era. They now seem well able to discriminate species by song, so even if they were to be in close contact there is not likely to be much competition between them. They have been known to form a mismatched pair. Hauser (1959) described a female Blue-headed Vireo paired with a male Yellow-throated Vireo; a nest was built, but no eggs were ever laid. This is probably a very exceptional circumstance. There are also several examples of these species singing the other species' song, but that is more likely to be the result of learning the wrong song than of hybridization (James 1984). There is little reason to expect that interspecific competition would be more than casual between these two species.

There have been numerous comments in the literature over the years about the "tameness" of Yellow-throated and Blue-headed

Vireos toward people (e.g., Harrison 1975). There are certainly some birds that allow close approach. However, as I have found, it is usually only at certain stages of the nesting cycle (not early or when large young are present). Furthermore, it is hardly tameness (i.e., having lost wildness, domesticated) as much as it is tolerance to intrusion. That tolerance has certainly made my studies even possible, and much more enjoyable.

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Notes

An Example of Crow Intelligence

George M. Fairfield

"Crows are known to be very adept at learning and to meet new and previously inexperienced conditions" (Gross 1946). Alfred Otto Gross (1946) cited experiments that showed that pet crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) could very quickly analyze and take advantage of emergent situations.

The heavy snowfall that occurred in Toronto on the night of 13-14 November 1997 provided me with an opportunity to observe wild crows taking advantage of a new situation. I was surprised when I looked at our bird feeder just after daybreak to see a crow pick up a peanut from the ground under the feeder and fly off with it. In the past, we have not seen crows come into our backyard except in the spring when they are searching for songbird nests around the house. We have never had them visit our feeder. We feed niger seed, sunflower seeds, beef fat and peanuts-in-the-shell, each food contained in the appropriate container and all suspended from arms on a single, squirrel-proof pole. The containers are all much too small to support a crow. I surmised that with 11 centimetres of fresh snow on the ground, the crow must have been finding food scarce.

The peanuts are "served" in a wire cage so that the Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) have to pry them out before flying off with them. In doing so, they invariably spill one or two on the ground where they are eaten by the squirrels. On the morning of the 14th, there were five squirrels under the feeder. There were also three crows in the tall maple in the neighbour's yard.

I watched for a few minutes as the crows sat quietly in the maple. Soon a Blue Jay flew to the small mountain ash in our yard, and the crows sat up and fidgeted in a way that I took to be anticipation and/or preparation for flight. When the Blue Jay flew to the feeder and spilled a peanut, a crow swooped down, picked it up and flew off with it. This behaviour was repeated several times. It was apparent that the crows were waiting for the arrival of the Blue Jays, and following them in to the feeder to get the spilled peanuts before the squirrels could get them.

After approximately one half hour, the peanuts were gone, and I went out to refill the feeder. The birds left and there were no jays or crows in sight as I continued my watch. After a few minutes, a Blue

Jay flew to our mountain ash tree. Almost immediately, two crows arrived back in the maple. The Blue Jay flew to the feeder and flew off with a peanut. In so doing, it spilled a peanut and one crow flew down and retrieved it before the squirrels could get it.

The interesting thing to me is that the crows quickly associated the arrival of Blue Jays with the availability of food. They were using the Blue Jays as "gofers" to make the peanuts available to them. Webster's New World Dictionary (1988) defines *gofer* as "an employee who performs minor or menial tasks such as running errands".

I had been feeding peanuts to Blue Jays in the way described above for over a year and had never seen the crows behaving in that manner before. The difference that time may have been the heavy ground cover of fresh snow. Since the snow occurred well before the onset of winter, it probably covered the food supply that was normally used by the crows at that time of year.

I recall seeing Gray Jays (*Perisoreus canadensis*) acting as "gofers" for Blue Jays when I worked in northern Ontario in the 1950s. The Gray Jays would come to our lunch spot, mooch pieces of sandwich, fly off and cache them in nearby trees for later retrieval. The Blue Jays would not approach closely enough to take our food offerings, but waited farther off in the woods and took the food caches left by the Gray Jays.

Granted, the two situations described above are not exactly parallel. The Blue Jays may have had a very long time to learn to follow Gray Jays and parasitize them for food. The case of the crows following the Blue Jays appeared to be an emergent situation. The crows quickly recognized that the arrival of the Blue Jays signalled that food would soon be available, and took advantage of the situation. Such a situation was not likely to happen very often. In fact, I never saw a reoccurrence despite a careful watch over the following winter.

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Book Reviews

1998 Peterborough County Natural History Summary. 1999. By *Peter S. Burke, Colin D. Jones, Jennifer M. Line, Michael J. Oldham and Peter J. Sorrill.* Peterborough Field Naturalists, Natural Heritage Information Centre, and Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario. Softcover, 219 pages. $10. (ISBN 0-7778-8506-7)

This annual summary of local natural history observations is similar to those previously produced in the province for Durham Regional Municipality and Victoria County. However, this volume establishes a new level of excellence for the "genre" in Ontario. The authors/compilers brought exceptional competence to their various subjects: Birds (Peter Burke), Mammals (Jennifer Line), Amphibians and Reptiles (Mike Oldham), Butterflies (Colin Jones), Dragonflies and Damselflies (Colin Jones), and Vascular Plants (Mike Oldham and Peter Sorrill). Each section (except for plants) presents compiled observations for 1998 and relates the sightings to the known status of each species for Peterborough County. The Checklist of Vascular Plants in this volume is the first ever compiled for the county. The participation and resources of the Peterborough Field Naturalists, the Natural Heritage Information Centre (MNR), and Trent University facilitated a scope (e.g., computer-generated occurrence maps) not previously attained for this type of compilation in Ontario. The text was also enhanced by the inclusion of black and white drawings and photographs by Madeline Austen, Peter Burke, Kim Caldwell, Mike Oldham, Michael Runtz and Don Ryckman. Finally, the authors deserve praise for their rapid production of the summary (March, 1999).

I found all the sections of this exceptional work to be of high quality. My suggestions for improvement in future issues of the summary are relatively minor. The maps of Counties and Townships (page 85) and Water Bodies (page 86) presented in the chapter on Amphibians and Reptiles would have been useful references for all sections of the book if they had been included in the Introduction. A map indicating the southern boundary of the Canadian Shield in Peterborough County (again in the Introduction) would have assisted in the interpretation of the various floral and faunal records.

In reviewing this book for *Ontario Birds*, I paid particular attention to the section on birds compiled by Peter Burke. I found it to be an informed, well written and interesting appraisal of the 1998 (and overall) status of birds in Peterborough County. Burke is to be particularly commended for his

attention to age, plumage and subspecies in the accounts. I detected only rare cases of apparently missing data (e.g., no dates provided for the first spring reports of Red-shouldered Hawk and Blackburnian Warbler), and typographical errors (e.g., Whip-poor-will, *not* Whip-Poor-Will; *Carpodacus not Cardopacus*; and winter of 1997-98 *not* 1998-99, in the Cedar Waxwing account).

This publication is an important contribution to our knowledge of the flora and fauna of Peterborough County and Ontario. Such a summary serves as a benchmark to document future environmental changes through impacts such as global warming, acid precipitation and exotic species. Ontario birders will find this natural history summary to be an interesting and informative reference, inviting comparisons with their home areas. It is to be hoped that it may inspire other jurisdictions to develop similar compilations.

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A Birder's Guide to Point Pelee (and Surrounding Region). 1999. By *Tom Hince.* Wild Rose Guest House, Wheatley, Ontario. Softcover, 189 pages. $24.95. (ISBN 0-9685310-0-8)

Birders accustomed to using birdfinding guides in the Lane/ABA series will recognize a familiar format in this new guide to birding at Point Pelee National Park and nearby areas. The book features a wire coil binding which allows it to lie flat when in use, and an extended backcover which serves as a "bookmark". There are 46 attractive black and white photographs of birds and birding locations, by Jim Flynn, Tom Hince, Ethan Meleg and Paul Pratt, plus 16 maps providing excellent details for most areas discussed.

The Introduction includes helpful information concerning Pelee's regional context, habitats, best birding times, accommodation options, weather, hazards, and birding pitfalls. The first section under "Birding Areas" is devoted to detailed descriptions of birding locations and likely species to be found within Point Pelee National Park. The next section contains such information for "birding sites within 15 minutes" of the park (e.g., Hillman Marsh, Wheatley Harbour, and Kopegaron Woods), followed by similar descriptions for sites "within 1 hour" of Pelee (e.g., Ojibway Park complex, Tremblay Beach Conservation Area, and Comber). All of these descriptions include clear directions for locating the sites, keyed to the numerous maps provided. A final section has brief introductions to areas "farther afield" that are "often linked with a visit" to Point Pelee (e.g., Pelee Island, Rondeau Provincial Park,

and Algonquin Provincial Park). Briefly annotated lists of amphibians and reptiles, and mammals for the sites in Essex County described in the book are also included. An extensive list of web sites pertaining to the region is another valuable feature.

An appendix titled "Birds of Particular Interest" provides "brief narratives on the status, local distribution and habits of selected species and groups of birds that occur in the region". This feature will be invaluable for the many visiting birders with a list of "wanted" species. Another helpful aspect is a bar graph showing the seasonal status and abundance of the 378 bird species recorded for the Point Pelee Birding Area and nearby Essex County.

Tom Hince brings a refreshingly candid writing style to this book. The information and personal insights provided reflect his advanced knowledge as a veteran birder, and more than a decade of employment as a Point Pelee National Park birding expert. Hince acknowledges the contribution of a long list of birders in the development of the book, and particularly Paul Pratt who authored sections on the Ojibway Park complex, Ruscom Shores, and the Detroit River.

I strongly recommend this guide to anyone birding the Point Pelee area, from the first time visitor to the veteran of many years. It provides very helpful information on birding locations and accurate appraisals of the birds likely to be found.

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PUBLICATION NOTICES

Warblers of Ontario. 1999. By *Chris G. Earley.* Point Pelee Nature Series, Lithosphere Press, Guelph, Ontario. Softcover, 96 pages. $7.00 (ISBN 0-920345-34-4)

This attractive, informative, and very inexpensive little book (pocket-sized for easy use in the field) was commissioned by The Friends of Point Pelee. It is an excellent guide to the identification of Ontario's warblers, featuring superb colour photographs by several well known photographers (e.g., Jim Flynn, Robert McCaw and Jim Richards). For each of Ontario's 35 regularly occurring warblers, the book provides up to seven photographs illustrating plumages by age, sex, and season, and a summary of key field marks. A section on an additional ten "vagrants and stragglers" provides single photographs and brief comments on their status. At the end of the book, groups of photographs and tables of field marks are presented to illustrate similar looking warblers in potentially "confusing" fall plumage.

Finally, photos of adult males in spring for the 35 regular warbler species are presented in a collage for direct comparison.

Special features include: Chris Earley's commendable selection of quotes from "earlier writings on warbler behaviour and identification", which provide dramatic and richly descriptive language rarely seen today; "nature notes" concerning the behaviour and ecology of each species; and a bar graph on the seasonal status of warblers at Point Pelee National Park. The top corners of pages are coloured to correspond with the throat colour of adult spring males, to help beginners locate them in the book for comparison purposes.

I strongly recommend this book to all Ontario birders with an interest in our beautiful warblers. Earley has created a well written, thoroughly researched, and effectively organized field guide. And The Friends of Point Pelee are to be congratulated for producing this valuable book, and wisely making it available to a large audience at such a low price. *Ron Tozer*

Mushrooms of Ontario and Eastern Canada. 1999. By *George Barron.* Lone Pine Publishing, Edmonton, Alberta. Softcover, 336 pages. $26.95. (ISBN 1-55105-199-0)

In this easy to use and attractive new guide, George Barron (retired University of Guelph mycologist) describes and illustrates 609 species of fungi that are "widespread, common or of striking appearance" in northeastern North America. The book features 875 colour photographs. To identify a mushroom, the reader may first place it in one of nine groups (Slime Moulds, Sac Fungi, Puffballs and friends, Bracket Fungi, Jelly Fungi, Coral Fungi, Tooth Fungi, Boletes, or Gill Fungi), utilizing a pictorial key featuring four photographs in each group, showing the range of fungi types it contains. Once the correct group has been determined, identification to genus (and often species) can be made by leafing through the illustrations of species in the group, or through use of dichotomous keys to genera.

While dealing primarily with identification, this guide also provides fascinating information on the life history, ecology, and edibility of the mushrooms. Barron writes well in a style that is easily understood by the "non-expert" in this field. This book is highly recommended to Ontario birders wanting to know more about those colourful mushrooms that we all see in our birding travels. *Ron Tozer*

In Memoriam

John L. Cranmer-Byng (1919-1999)

Ross D. James

Jack, to those who knew him, loved the intricate beauty of Nature, and felt a lasting responsibility to encourage an appreciation of and a respect for the natural world. He shared this interest with Margaret, his wife for more than 40 years, and together they inspired in their children, Alison, Colin and Sheila, a similar concern for the earth that sustains us all.

Jack was born in England, 18 March 1919, where, encouraged by his parents, he began a lifelong interest in birds before the age of ten. He majored in history at Cambridge, graduating with honours before being embroiled in the Second World War. Shortly after distinguished service in the war, he began to study Chinese, first at Cambridge, and then in 1954, in Singapore. But, neither the formidable task of learning Chinese and the history of China, nor the fascinating bird life of Malaysia, managed to keep him fully occupied, for there he met and later married Margaret.

They moved to Hong Kong in 1956, where he was appointed lecturer in history at the University. In 1964, the family moved to Canada, where Jack became a professor in the History Department at the University of Toronto. He taught and researched Chinese history there until his retirement in 1984. His concern for environmental issues also led to his becoming an associate of the U. of T. Institute for Environmental Studies. He was active in trying to find ways to conserve urban natural areas. For his research and publications in this area, he received a Federation of Ontario Naturalists Conservation Award. He was an active member of local naturalist organizations throughout his life.

Shortly before retirement, Jack became interested in the life of Percy Taverner, the first ornithologist at what is now the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa. For more than 40 years, Taverner helped lay the foundations of scientific ornithology in Canada, was a leading advocate for bird conservation, and fostered a widespread interest in birds through publications about the birds of Canada. Yet there was little available published information about him. Jack, as a historian and ornithologist, about to have time to pursue personal interests, undertook to chronicle the life of Taverner.

As frequently happens, however, a more modest idea turned out to

be a far larger task. With the wealth of information available, Jack decided such a work had to include "a look at events, personalities, and achievements that were part of the development of ornithology in Canada in the first part of the twentieth century", not just a chronology of one person's life. And so, a casual pastime became a decade long absorbing challenge.

I met Jack as he began the biography, searching through backrooms of the Royal Ontario Museum for scattered bits and pieces, but it was with publication that we got to know each other better. I reviewed a thoroughly researched and insightful manuscript, carefully prepared by Margaret. But, after lengthy negotiations with a publisher, and complete acceptance of the content, it was turned down because of money, and despite the promise of a hefty sum from Jack. It is a devastating feeling to be told, in essence, that ten years of your life were not worth it.

Not wishing to go through an overwhelming rejection from another publisher, he called me for suggestions. I was able to contact and facilitate consideration by the Publications Committee and Editor of the *Canadian Field-Naturalist*, who were able and willing at the time to publish the biography. Special Issue, Volume 110, Number 1, January-March 1996, makes for fascinating reading of the life and times of ornithologists early in this century. It is well worth reading for an understanding of the development of current activities in which all of us now participate.

The completion of the Taverner biography was a monumental undertaking for Jack and Margaret. But, even as Jack's health began to deteriorate, the compelling fascination of birds kept them involved. They helped with the editing of OFO Special Publication No. 1, *Ornithology in Ontario*, and continued to participate in OFO annual meetings. Jack left us peacefully on 6 April 1999, following a stroke. He enriched the lives of many, with his carefully researched writings that will continue to inspire, and the enthusiasm for nature he and Margaret encouraged in others along the way.

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Photo Quiz

Bob Curry

You are birding in an open area in fall on the lookout for birds of brushy habitats and of adjacent lawn and gravel substrates. You are identifying sparrows, pipits and maybe a few late warblers of more open habitats when onto the fence pops the bird shown in the photo. At this point, you have not seen its behaviour, nor have you seen it in flight. It seems to have a rather fine bill, so thoughts of potential warblers momentarily pass through your head. Is it a Tennessee Warbler? No, the bill is not nearly so fine and downcurved as in that species and the legs are too long and robust. The bird is also too large and chunky for a *Vermivora*. How about female Black-throated Blue? Again, that species has a more slender bill and a much less bold superciliary stripe. The wing pattern is wrong also. Black-throated Blue Warbler has a white patch at the edge of the folded primaries but is otherwise plain-winged, whereas this bird has patterned lesser and median upperwing coverts. But what of the really bizarre; could it be a Swainson's Warbler? The overall pattern and shading seems correct and Swainson's is a large warbler which

fits this bird better than the first two; but again, the supercilium is not as strong as in this bird, there is no dark below the eye and the wings are entirely plain and unmarked. Moreover, a Swainson's Warbler on a fence in fall in Ontario is an extremely improbable scenario.

The trouble with these quiz analyses is that the mind works astoundingly fast processing perceptions into conceptions at lightning speed. Written explanations are stolid by comparison and add an artificial rigidity to bird identification. So I ask readers to imagine that at least the first half of this analysis would take place in, at most, two or three seconds. Moreover, some of the analysis explicated here would be done almost at a subliminal level and we would state later that we instantly recognized the bird for what it was, forgetting that years of experience and learning have allowed our minds to do this sifting at amazing speed.

So where were we? The bird is plain enough that we should consider vireos. Although Philadelphia and Warbling Vireos have plain plumage, they are eliminated, as is so often the case in bird identification, by shape and proportions. Vireos have proportionately thicker bills which are slightly hooked at the tip. They are more large-headed and bull-necked, with shorter, more slender legs. Moreover, they also do not have patterned upperwing coverts.

Another rarity which would fly up to a fence and which has dark through and below the eye is an immature Vermilion Flycatcher. However, it perches in a more erect stance, has short weak legs, has some streaking on the breast, is a darker shade on the belly and undertail, and has darker wings and tail.

So the erect posture; plump, deep breast and belly; straight, narrow and fine-tipped bill; and sturdy legs all point to a thrush. And, of these, only bluebirds have clear unpatterned underparts. But they have an eyering rather than a white supercilium, have no dark shadow under the eye, and possess plainer lesser and median upper wing coverts.

Our bird is, then, a **Northern Wheatear**, an identification which, as discussed earlier, many readers would have arrived at almost instantly. If we were next to see it fly, the identification would be clinched as the bold white rump and distinctive tail pattern virtually assaulted our eyes. Chaucer referred to this common English bird as the "white-arse", hence the common name today.

This is a member of a large Palearctic genus of which only this species has colonized North America, making inroads from both Siberia into Alaska and the Yukon in the Northwest, and from Greenland into Canada's eastern Arctic. In Ontario, however, the Northern Wheatear is a rare bird

indeed. There was one occurrence along the Hudson Bay coastline during the Breeding Bird Atlas project, but it is essentially during fall migration that the Greenland Wheatear, as the subspecies which migrates to Africa is known, is found in southeastern Canada and northeastern United States. Most, if not all, such records are of first basic birds, a few of which, annually, migrate SSE from their birthplaces in the northeastern Arctic instead of due east to Europe before heading south. These immatures lack the bold contrasting black wings and black face mask of their parents but, as has been discussed, are readily identified. The eastern subspecies, *Oenanthe o. leucorhoa*, is more strongly buffy on the breast, which can be seen in all our birds, and measures larger, which cannot be determined in the field. In some years there are no reports, but it is virtually annual somewhere in southern Ontario.

They have been found in clearings and communities hacked out of the boreal forest which act as oases for open country birds such as this, but I suggest checking large open lawn areas adjacent to any of the eastern Great Lakes or large rivers. And, although fall dates range from the end of August until mid-October, concentrate your efforts in the period 23-26 September as there is a distinct peak in frequency of occurrence in the East during this short time frame. The quiz bird was photographed by Glenn Coady at Oshawa, *Durham*, on 15 October 1995.

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