

# Articles

## Ontario Bird Records Committee Report for 2004

William J. Crins

### Introduction

The Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) evaluates documentation it receives of any record of a species or recognizable form that is on the Review List for Ontario (see [www.ofo.ca/obrc](http://www.ofo.ca/obrc)). In addition, it reviews documentation relating to new species, new subspecies, and new breeding species for the province. This 23rd annual report deals with the results of the adjudication of 127 records reviewed by the OBRC during 2004, of which 77% were accepted. A total of 119 different observers submitted documentation for review by the 2004 committee. Reports were submitted by a wide range of birders, from experts to novices, and often were accompanied by photographs (prints or digital images), copies of field notes, sketches, and, in one case, a videotape.

As noted last year, there is an increasing trend toward the submission of photographic evidence only, often involving the posting of digital images on the OFO website, or the forwarding of digital images to the Committee directly, with little or no written documentation to support them. Information on the dates of observation, additional details

describing the bird, and circumstances under which the observations were made are helpful in providing context for a record, as well as supplementing the features visible on the photographs (e.g., behaviour, comparisons with nearby birds, features hidden from view when the photograph was taken). Thus, we continue to urge observers to submit written reports to accompany the images submitted to OBRC or posted on the OFO website. For further information on the kinds of information that should be included in the written report, refer to the guidance available on the OBRC page on the OFO website ([www.ofo.ca/obrc](http://www.ofo.ca/obrc)).

The members of the 2004 committee were Margaret J. C. Bain, William J. Crins (non-voting secretary), Robert Curry, David H. Elder, Christopher J. Escott, Kevin A. McLaughlin, Ronald G. Tozer (chair), and Alan Wormington (Figure 1). Mark K. Peck continued to serve in the role of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) liaison (non-voting) to the OBRC in 2004. Kayo J. Roy re-joined the team in the role of Assistant to the Secretary during 2004.

The official Ontario bird checklist has increased by one species to

477 species, with the addition of Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*).

### **Listing of Records**

The format for listing the number of accepted records for each species remains the same as that used last year (Crins 2004). A single number is used to indicate the total number of accepted records of a Review List species. In the past, trinomial or binomial systems were used in the annual reports, but these have been discontinued. Accepted records are arranged taxonomically by their English and scientific names following the Seventh Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (American Ornithologists' Union 1998) and its 42nd supplement (American Ornithologists' Union 2000). 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 that of Humphrey and Parkes (1959). For a detailed explanation of plumage and molt terminology, see Pittaway (2000). The names of all contributors of documentation are listed. Those contributors who are known to be the discoverers of the bird also are underlined. Others present when the bird was found who did not submit reports are listed when known.

The committee attempts to verify documented information prior to the acceptance and publication of a

record, but it is inevitable that inaccuracies creep in from time to time. The committee welcomes written communication to the secretary from anyone with pertinent information that would correct or strengthen any record. There may be occasions where dates or other listed details in a record differ from those quoted in other published sources.

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 obtained from the voting members. These reports, as well as documentation for all accepted records, are kept on permanent file at the ROM. A "not accepted" report can be reconsidered by the OBRC if new evidence, in the form of additional documentation, is submitted to the committee for review. Researchers and other interested individuals are welcome to examine any of the filed reports at the ROM, but an appointment is necessary. Please write to Mark K. Peck, Department of Natural History, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6 (e-mail: markp@rom.on.ca or telephone 416-586-5523).

### **Changes to the Review List**

No changes to the Review List were made during 2004. Although not a component of the Review List *per se*, it should be noted that the first

confirmed breeding attempt by Black-necked Stilt was made in 2004, thus requiring the addition of an “\*” beside this species on the Ontario Bird Checklist (Ontario Field Ornithologists 2004).

### **Acknowledgements**

The OBRC would like to extend its appreciation to the many observers who took the time to submit documentation of their observations of rare birds for consideration by the 2004 committee. We thank the following people who assisted the committee in the acquisition of additional data and other material evidence that supplemented the information submitted directly by observers and committee members, or by providing expert opinions on material evidence submitted to the committee: Colin Bowen, Stephen R. Charbonneau, Tamara Chipperfield, Bruce M. Di Labio, Nicholas G. Escott, Christian Friis, Steve N. G. Howell, Jean Iron, Alvaro Jaramillo, Kevin Kavanagh, Paul E. Lehman, Nicholas A. Lethaby, Hugh McGuinness, Kevin

A. McLaughlin, Stephen T. Pike, Ronald J. Pittaway, George W. Prieksaitis, Peter Pyle, Ron C. Ridout, Roy B. H. Smith, R. Terry Sprague, Mark A. Stackhouse, Jennifer Stucker, Paul W. Sykes, and Christopher W. Thompson.

The committee also is indebted to Mark H. Cranford for his continuing efforts in ensuring that ONT-BIRDS (listserv of the Ontario Field Ornithologists) remains a useful source of information on rare birds appearing in Ontario. In addition, the photographic pages on the OFO website, maintained through 2004 by Sandra Eadie, provide an excellent source of documentation for rarities. These sources of information make the secretary's job of securing documentation much more efficient. Also, Kayo J. Roy's valuable assistance in tracking down documentation for reports has been immensely helpful to me. Finally, I wish to thank the members of the 2004 committee for their support and assistance during the year.

## **CORRIGENDUM**

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The location of the Mute Swan north of the Attawapiskat River should be 82° 16' W, not 87° 16' W.



**Figure 1:** Ontario Bird Records Committee members for 2004. Left to right, standing: Bill Crins, Kevin McLaughlin, Bob Curry, Chris Escott, Alan Wormington; seated: Ron Tozer, Margaret Bain. Not in photo: Dave Elder, Mark Peck, Kayo Roy. Photo by *Mark K. Peck*.



**Figure 2:** Pacific Loon in definitive prebasic molt present at Fifty Point, *Hamilton/Niagara*, between 31 October and 5 November 2004. Photo by *Brandon R. Holden*.



**Figure 3: Female Wilson's Plover in first alternate plumage present at Hamilton Harbour, *Hamilton*, from 15 to 19 May 2004. Photo by *Jean Iron*.**



**Figure 4: Black-necked Stilt (one member of a nesting pair) present at Jarvis sewage lagoons, *Haldimand*, between 18 May and 5 June 2004. Photo by *Brandon R. Holden*.**



**Figure 5: Wandering Tattler in definitive alternate plumage present at Windmill Point, *Niagara*, between 8 and 13 June 1977. Photo by Alan Wormington.**



**Figure 6: California Gull (left) in definitive basic plumage present at Niagara Falls, *Niagara*, between 18 December 2003 and 8 January 2004. Photo by Willie D'Anna.**



**Figure 7:** Juvenal/first basic female Rufous Hummingbird present at Niagara Falls, Niagara, from 2 September to 18 December 2004. Photo by *Brandon R. Holden*.



**Figure 8:** Fork-tailed Flycatcher present at Slate River Valley, Thunder Bay, from early October until 19 November 2004. Photo by *Brian D. Ratcliff*.



**Figure 9:** Rock Wren present at Elk Lake, *Timiskaming*, between 4 and 7 May 2004. Photo by *Barry J. Kinch*.



**Figure 10:** Golden-crowned Sparrow in first basic plumage present at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, from 6 November to 11 December 2004. Photo by *William J. Edmunds*.





**Figure 11: Male Lazuli Bunting in definitive alternate plumage present at Bells Corners, *Ottawa*, between 29 and 31 May 2004. Photo by *Lois I. Knaggs*.**



**Figure 12: Female Great-tailed Grackle in basic plumage present at Turkey Point, *Norfolk*, on 7 and 8 February 2004. Photo by *Ron C. Ridout*.**

## Accepted Records

### Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica* South Only (28)

- 2004 - one, definitive prebasic molt, 22 October, Wicklow Beach, *Northumberland* (Margaret J. C. Bain).
- one, definitive alternate, 31 October, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).
- one, definitive prebasic molt, 31 October - 5 November, Fifty Point Conservation Area, *Hamilton/Niagara* (Brandon R. Holden, Cheryl E. Edgecombe) – photos on file.
- one, juvenal, 8-13 November, Toronto, *Toronto* (Winnie Poon, Christopher J. Escott).
- one, definitive prebasic molt, 10 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).
- one, definitive basic, 30 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).
- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 16 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Brett M. Ewald, Tony F. M. Beck).

The autumn of 2004 was excellent for viewing Pacific Loons in their south-bound migration, as evidenced by the six accepted records from that period. Two of the birds remained in their locations for a few days, enabling many observers to see them. Careful observation is required in identifying this species when in molt or in juvenal and basic plumages. Both Pacific Loon and Common Loon (*G. immer*) can be in various stages of prebasic molt during fall migration (Palmer 1962).

### Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (6)

- 2003 - one, *O. o. oceanicus*, 23 September, John E. Pearce Provincial Park, *Elgin* (Donald Littlejohn, Jamie Littlejohn) – found dead (fresh); specimen (skin) in ROM (#93781).
- one, *O. o. oceanicus*, 27 September, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton* (John L. Olmsted, Robert W. Stamp, James E. Heslop, Jack R. Hanna) – found dead (badly decomposed); photos on file; specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#96676).

A summary of previous records of Wilson's Storm-Petrel was provided in last year's report (Crins 2004). At that time, the two specimens reported above were not yet available for examination. These birds also were associated with the passage of Hurricane Isabel.

### Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* (29)

- 2003 - one, juvenal, 6-15 December; 6-12 December, Niagara Falls, 15 December, Queenston, *Niagara* (Willie D'Anna, Peter S. Burke) – photos on file.

### Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (10)

- 2004 - one, 20 May, Prince Edward Point, *Prince Edward* (Margaret J. C. Bain, also found by David Okines, R. Andrew Cadman, Eric A. Machell).

### Great Egret *Ardea alba* North Only (11)

- 2003 - one, 25 September, Eagle Lake, *Kenora* (Tom Wood) – photos on file.

**Little Blue Heron** *Egretta caerulea* (52)

- 2004 - one, definitive alternate, 11-14 May, south of Glen Morris, *Brant* (John R. Pomeroy, Robert Curry) – photo on file.
- 1968 - one, juvenal, 16 July, Port Colborne, *Niagara* (Richard Brownstein, found by Daniel R. Salisbury).

**Tricolored Heron** *Egretta tricolor* (34)

- 2004 - one, first alternate, 22 May, Rock Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand* (William W. Watson, also found by James M. Pawlicki).
- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 5-10 May, Verschoyle, *Oxford* (David A. Martin, found by Nadine Bird).
- 1985 - one, definitive alternate, 18 May, Toronto, *Toronto* (Greg Sadowski) – photo on file.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** *Nyctanassa violacea* (37)

- 2004 - one, definitive alternate, 25-26 April, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex* (Michael F. Malone, found by Marianne Guyitt, Norm Guyitt) – photos on file.
- one, definitive alternate, 30 May, Toronto, *Toronto* (Seabrooke Leckie).
- one, definitive alternate, 31 May – 2 June; 31 May, Burlington, 2 June, Bronte, *Halton* (Gavin R. Edmondstone) – photos on file.

The *Halton* bird was observed in a garden in Burlington, initially. A few days later, what was likely the same bird was observed on the sixth floor terrace of an apartment building in Bronte, about 8 km east of the first sighting.

**Ibis species** *Plegadis* sp. (37)

- 2004 - one, basic, 10-11 October, Hillman Marsh, *Essex* (Ian M. Richards, Alan Wormington).
- 2002 - one, alternate, 26 April, Erieau, *Chatham-Kent* (Keith J. Burk) – photo on file.

**Black Vulture** *Coragyps atratus* (49)

- 2004 - one, 5 April, Grimsby, *Niagara* (Thomas Thomas, also found by David Sked, Keith Sealy).
- one, 19 April, Point Petre, *Prince Edward* (Lloyd Paul).
- 2003 - one, 30 September, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, *Essex* (George D. Bryant, also found by Sidney M. Daniels, Aarne Juhola).
- 2002 - one, 10 April, Elmbrook, *Prince Edward* (Joanne J. Dewey, also found by Sarah D. Dewey).

There has been a series of observations of this species throughout *Prince Edward* over the past couple of years. The frequency of these reports (eight sightings over a fourteen-month period from 9 September 2003 to 22 October 2004, represented above by the 19 April 2004 report) suggests that all observations pertain to a single bird that was “trapped” in the county (R. Terry Sprague, pers. comm.; Alan Wormington, pers. comm.). Black Vultures generally tend not to cross water bodies (Kaufman 1996), and since *Prince Edward* is almost entirely surrounded by water, this hypothesis is plausible.

**Ross’s Goose** *Chen rossii* South Only (44)

- 2004 - one, white morph, 6 March, Amherstburg, *Essex* (Len Jones) – photo on file.

- one, white morph, 30 March – 8 April, Sucker Creek Landing, *Sudbury* (Angela Martin, Grant McKercher) – photo on file.
  - one, white morph, 10-11 April, Pleasant Valley, *Manitoulin* (Nicole Belanger-Smith, found by Erwin Meissner) – photos on file.
  - one, white morph, 26 September – early October; 26 September, Wheatley Harbour, 30 September, Sturgeon Creek, early October, Kingsville, *Essex* (Dean J. Ware, Alan Wormington) – photo on file.
- 2003
- one, white morph, 16-30 November, Erie Beach, *Chatham-Kent* (Keith J. Burk, also found by James T. Burk).
  - one, juvenal, white morph, 23 November, Mohawk Bay to Lowbanks, *Haldimand* (Willie D'Anna, also found by Dean DiTommaso) – photos on file.

The bird observed from 26 September to early October 2004 was captured, clipped, and banded at the Jack Miner Sanctuary in Kingsville, *Essex*, where it still resides (Alan Wormington, pers. comm.).

### **Cinnamon Teal** *Anas cyanoptera* (13)

- 2004
- two, alternate, male and female, 7 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Martyn Hnatiuk, found by Michael Holden, Randy Fowler).

### **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* (27)

- 2004
- one, definitive alternate, male, 24 January – 6 February, Port Weller, *Niagara* (Kayo J. Roy, Kenneth M. Newcombe) – photos on file.

### **Common Eider** *Somateria mollissima* **South Only** (20)

- 2004
- one, female, 9 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Tim G. Baerwald) – photos on file.

There is a suspicion that this was the same bird that was present at the same location in May 2003, and that was observed in the adjacent waters of Ohio and Michigan until July 2003 (Wormington 2003b, Crins 2004).

### **Harlequin Duck** *Histrionicus histrionicus* **North Only** (18)

- 2004
- one, 4 September, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.
- This is the earliest fall migrant ever recorded in Ontario. The photograph indicates that the bird was either a female or a juvenile.

### **Mississippi Kite** *Ictinia mississippiensis* (33)

- 2003
- one, first basic, 25 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Keith J. Burk, also found by Blake A. Mann, Stephen R. Charbonneau, James T. Burk).

The Mississippi Kite undergoes an unusual molt sequence relative to other diurnal raptors, which may make aging these birds difficult, prior to their definitive (adult) plumages. Molting appears to take place gradually during the winter, with renewal of flight feathers even further delayed until the following summer. Thus, juvenile wing and tail feathers are retained while head and body feathers have molted into first basic condition. The wings and tail are renewed as part of the second prebasic (definitive prebasic) molt (Palmer 1988).

**Wilson's Plover** *Charadrius wilsonia* (2)

2004 - one, first alternate, female, 15-19 May, Hamilton Harbour, *Hamilton* (Kenneth Williams, Gavin R. Edmondstone, Jean Iron) – photos on file.

This outstanding rarity, normally occurring no closer than the barrier beaches of Virginia, is only the second documented record for the province. McLaughlin (1990) provided a detailed account of the first record, on 26 May 1990, at a location quite close to that of the 2004 bird. Documentation for an earlier record, on 17-20 May 1966, at Hamilton Beach, *Hamilton*, discovered by George W. North and observed by several others, has gone missing, making that record unreviewable (McLaughlin 1990). A further undocumented record involved a bird seen by several observers on 8 May 1967, at Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Worthington, pers. comm.).

**Piping Plover** *Charadrius melodus* (54)

- 2004 - one, first alternate, 7 May, Burlington Beach, *Halton* (Ian M. Richards, also found by Sandra Bateman).  
 - one, first alternate, 8 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin).  
 - one, definitive alternate, 11-17 May, Oshawa, *Durham* (Dan Kaczynski, David B. Worthington) – photo on file.  
 - one, 17 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Blake A. Mann, Sandy Dobbyn) – photo on file.  
 - one, 22-23 May, Oshawa, *Durham* (James Dixon).
- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 31 May, Windy Point, *Rainy River* (Jean Iron, found by David H. Elder, Mary Elder, Ronald G. Tozer) – photos on file.

The Burlington bird was banded on the tarsus of the right leg, with a double coloured band (dark green above, orange below) above a standard aluminum band, indicating that this bird was banded as a nestling in one of two possible locations in the northern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula in 2003 (Jennifer Stucker, pers. comm., to Ian M. Richards). The Rondeau bird also was banded as a chick in Michigan, perhaps at the same location. There is uncertainty about the year of banding, because of the difficulty in determining the composition of the silver band (aluminum or incoloy), but there is a chance that it also was banded in 2003 (Blake A. Mann, pers. comm.). These observations point out the value of recording even partial band information (leg, colour combinations, arrangements).

**Black-necked Stilt** *Himantopus mexicanus* (13)

- 2004 - two, definitive alternate, male and female, nest with three eggs, 18 May – 5 June, Townsend and Jarvis, *Haldimand* (Barry D. Jones, John G. Keenleyside, Barry S. Cherriere, Brandon R. Holden, Mark K. Peck, Glenn Coady, Kenneth M. Newcombe) – photos on file; specimen (egg) in ROM (#500585).  
 - one, basic, female, 10 November – 10 December, Ridgetown, *Chatham-Kent* (Stephen T. Pike, P. Allen Woodliffe, Claude Radley, found by Craig Anderson) – photos on file.

The Jarvis record above, in addition to being spectacular in its own right, con-

stitutes the first breeding record for Ontario! A nest with three eggs was discovered by Mark K. Peck on 28 May, with a further “dropped” egg found 10 m away from the nest on 31 May by Glenn Coady. Full details of this nesting attempt are provided by Peck et al. (2004, 2005). Along with a summary of previous reports of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario, they provide an excellent overview of recent extralimital breeding records and other occurrences of this species in nearby jurisdictions (Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio), which provides further context for this first breeding record for the province. Both reports during 2004 involved birds that remained for quite a long time at each location, providing good viewing opportunities for numerous observers.

### **Wandering Tattler** *Heteroscelus incanus* (3)

- 1977 - one, definitive alternate, 8-13 June, Windmill Point, *Niagara* (David B. Freeland, Robert F. Andrie, Alan Wormington) – photos on file.
- 1960 - one, definitive alternate, 11-15 July, Windmill Point, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, Harold D. Mitchell).
- 1948 - one, definitive prebasic molt, 1 August, Sugar Loaf Point, *Niagara* (Harold D. Mitchell, also found by Harold H. Axtell et al.).

These three records constitute the full set of Wandering Tattler records for Ontario to date, comprising two spring migrants and one fall migrant. Mitchell (1950) published a note containing a description of the bird and the circumstances of the 1948 observation. The date of discovery of the bird from 1960 often has been cited incorrectly as 12 July, rather than 11 July (e.g., Beardslee and Mitchell 1965, Speirs 1985, James 1991). There are apparently only three additional records of Wandering Tattler in eastern North America: Massachusetts in 1968 (Veit and Petersen 1993); Manitoba in 1981 (Manitoba Avian Research Committee 2003, Jehl 2004); and Texas in 1992 (Lockwood and Freeman 2004).

### **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* (24)

- 2004 - one, definitive alternate, 16 August, Rock Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand* (Thomas Thomas, also found by David Sked).

### **Long-tailed Jaeger** *Stercorarius longicaudus* South Only (32)

- 2004 - one, juvenal, intermediate morph, 16 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).

### **Mew Gull** *Larus canus* (18)

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, *L. c. brachyrhynchus*, 6-18 December; 6 December, Niagara Falls, 13, 16, 18 December, Queenston, *Niagara* (Colin D. Jones, Peter S. Burke, Willie D’Anna, J. Burke Korol) – photos on file.

### **California Gull** *Larus californicus* (41)

- 2004 - one, definitive basic, *L. c. albertaensis*, 15-17 October, Wheatley Harbour, *Chatham-Kent/Essex* (Dean J. Ware, Alan Wormington).

- 2003/2004 - one, definitive basic, 9 November – 18 January, Queenston, *Niagara* (Willie D'Anna, found by Jean Iron) – photos on file.  
 - one, definitive basic, 18 December – 8 January, Niagara Falls, *Niagara* (Jean Iron, Willie D'Anna, also found by Kevin A. McLaughlin) – photos on file.

It has been suggested that the same definitive basic bird has been appearing along the Niagara River for several years now, but it is difficult to state unequivocally whether the same or different birds are involved. The fact that multiple birds have appeared there over the past few years makes the contention even more difficult to assess.

### **Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* South Only After 1990 (10)**

- 2004 - four, definitive alternate, 21 May, Embrun, *Prescott & Russell* (Robert A. Bracken, Christina Lewis, also found by Paul Mirsky).  
 1990 - one, definitive alternate, 17 August, Waverly Beach, *Niagara* (Alec Humann).

### **Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* (11)**

- 2003 - one, 27 November – 7 December, London, *Middlesex* (Alfred L. Adamo, Scott Fairbairn, Curtis A. Marantz, Peter S. Burke, found by Gerry Meacham) – photos on file.

On 7 December 2003, while being chased by a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), this bird collided with the siding of a house a few doors away from the feeder it was frequenting (pers. obs.; Hugh Casbourn, pers. comm.). It was nursed back to health and released on 21 December in the same area, where it was seen until 10 April 2004.

### **Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (7)**

- 2003 - one, 11 July, Staples, *Essex* (Marianne B. Reid).

### **White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* (18)**

- 2004 - one, 26 April, Kagawong, *Manitoulin* (Nicole Belanger-Smith, also found by John C. Smith) – photos on file.  
 - one, 8-9 May, Tobermory, *Bruce* (Douglas C. Sheepway, found by Don Wilkes, Margie Wilkes) – photo on file.  
 - one, 15 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Martin Blagdurn, also found by Rosann Kovalcik).  
 - one, 15 September, Bronte, *Halton* (Cheryl E. Edgecombe, Thomas A. Crooks, Peter Booker, David R. Don, also found by Joyce Lechasseur).

### **Barn Owl *Tyto alba* (2)**

- 2003 - one, 5 December, Pickering, *Durham* (Andrew Davis).

### **Chuck-will's-widow *Caprimulgus carolinensis* (16)**

- 2003 - one, male, 15 May, La Salle, *Essex* (Paul D. Pratt, also found by Patricia Broad).

### **Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus* (16)**

- 2004 - one, juvenal/first basic, female, 2 September - 18 December, Niagara Falls, *Niagara* (Janice M. Haines, William W. Watson, Brandon R. Holden, Willie D'Anna, Cindy

E. Cartwright, Allen T. Chartier, also found by Arthur L. Haines) – photos on file; specimen (skin) in ROM (#96755).

Janice Haines (2005) has written an engaging account of the occurrence of this bird at her home. It was captured, banded, and released on 2 December. Measurements, detailed observations, and photographs of the central and outer tail feathers were taken while the bird was being banded, and these were compared to the diagnostic features outlined by Stiles (1972). Tail feather width, tail length, and wing length measurements all supported the identification of this bird as a Rufous Hummingbird (Allen T. Chartier, ONTBIRDS posting, 3 December 2004). In that posting, Chartier also indicated that there were at least 10 other *Selasphorus* hummingbirds in adjacent states during the fall of 2004.

### **Lewis's Woodpecker** *Melanerpes lewis* (8)

2004 - one, 12-17 May, 19 km north of Stratton, *Rainy River* (David H. Elder, found by Moie Neilson, Marj Neilson).

### **Red-bellied Woodpecker** *Melanerpes carolinus* North Only (15)

2004 - one, male, 8-18 May, Devlin, *Rainy River* (Arlene Rea) – photo on file.  
 - one, first basic, female, 19-20 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Kyle Wright, John M. Woodcock, also found by Nick Bartok) – photo on file.  
 2002 - one, female, 13-16 May, Eagle River, *Kenora* (Carolle Eady, found by Gavin Eady).

### **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** *Tyrannus forficatus* (45)

2004 - one, definitive alternate, 6 August, Wesleyville, *Northumberland* (John McGuirk, Margaret J. C. Bain).

### **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** *Tyrannus savana* (6)

2004 - one, 26 April, Stouffville, *York* (Alan K. Johnston, also found by Bruce W. Humphries) – photo on file.  
 - one, early October – 19 November, Slate River Valley, *Thunder Bay* (Brian D. Ratcliff, found by Gerald Breukelman) – photos on file.  
 - one, definitive, female, *T. s. savana*, 5-6 December, Hillman Marsh, *Essex* (Michael A. Savino, Debra K. Savino) – photos on file; specimen (skin) in ROM (#99431).

The occurrence of three Fork-tailed Flycatchers in Ontario in a single year has happened once before. In 1996, three birds were reported, although documentation was received for only two of them (Dobos 1997). James (1991) reports an earlier record from northern Ontario, at Dorion, *Thunder Bay*, on 28-30 October 1977, but this record has not yet been reviewed by the OBRC. The bird in Stouffville provides a first spring record for this species in Ontario, and is the earliest record so far recorded from north-central and northeastern North America (Lockwood 1999). All other records involve fall wanderers. The Slate River Valley bird stayed for well over a month, an unusually long duration, given the species' propensity "... to disappear shortly after being found..." (Lockwood 1999). The Hillman Marsh bird constitutes the latest occurrence of



this species in the province. This latter specimen has been identified as the nominate race, which breeds in central and southeastern South America, and undergoes northward migrations following the austral breeding season. There are now well over 100 documented records of this species scattered across North America, most of which are believed to involve the nominate race, but there are very few specimen records (Lockwood 1999).

**White-eyed Vireo** *Vireo griseus* **North Only (3)**

2004 - one, definitive basic, 21 October, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.

This record constitutes only the third documented occurrence of White-eyed Vireo in northern Ontario. All three have been autumn records, with the first at Marathon, *Thunder Bay*, on 13 October 1986 (Wormington 1987), and the second at Rosspoint, *Thunder Bay*, on 29 September 1994 (Dobos 1996).

**Rock Wren** *Salpinctes obsoletus* **(4)**

2004 - one, 4-7 May, Elk Lake, *Timiskaming* (Stanley V. Phippen, Barry J. Kinch) – photos on file.

Four Rock Wren reports have been accepted from Ontario. The others occurred on 6-7 December 1964 at Port Weller, *Niagara* (Roy 2001), 12 February – 5 March 1989 at Etobicoke, *Toronto* (Wormington and Curry 1990), and 1-6 May 1993 at Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Pittaway 1995). A few additional reports have yet to be reviewed by the Committee.

**Sage Thrasher** *Oreoscoptes montanus* **(11)**

2004 - one, 21 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Kyle Wright, John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.

**Kirtland's Warbler** *Dendroica kirtlandii* **(33)**

2004 - one, definitive alternate, male, 11 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Rick Ortlieb, also found by Jeanne Ortlieb) – video on file.

- one, first alternate, male, 17-19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alfred L. Adamo, Blake A. Mann, Barry S. Cheriére, Brandon R. Holden) – photos on file.

**Swainson's Warbler** *Limnithlypis swainsonii* **(6)**

2004 - one, 11 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (James W. Barrett, Sheila Turple).

This is the first record for this species in Ontario since 1995, when one was found at Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Dobos 1996).

**Yellow-breasted Chat** *Icteria virens* **North Only (6)**

2003 - one, 7-22 November, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Bert Harding).

All but one of the six accepted records for northern Ontario have involved autumn migrants between the dates of 13 September and 26 November.

**Summer Tanager** *Piranga rubra* **North Only (12)**

2004 - one, female, 4 May, Silver Islet, *Thunder Bay* (William Climic) – photo on file.

**Henslow's Sparrow** *Ammodramus henslowii* **(9)**

2004 - one, 11-12 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Barry S. Cherriere) – photo on file.

**Golden-crowned Sparrow** *Zonotrichia atricapilla* **(10)**

2004 - one, first basic, 6 November- 11 December, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* (Joachim W. Floegel, Michael J. McEvoy, Latafat Correa, William W. Watson, William J. Edmunds) – photos on file.

This sparrow was present for over a month, and was exceedingly well chronicled on nearly a daily basis by J. Douglas Lockrey and others on OFO's ONTBIRDS listserv. Hundreds of observers saw this obliging and extremely rare bird.

**Blue Grosbeak** *Guiraca caerulea* **(59)**

2004 - one, alternate, female, 6-8 May, Long Point (Tip), *Norfolk* (Sophie Barker, Michael Burrell, Christian Friis) – photos on file.

2002 - one, female, 26 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Keith J. Burk, also found by James T. Burk).

1923 - one, definitive alternate, male, 18 May, Eberts, *Chatham-Kent* (E. H. Dorey).

The 1923 report from Eberts constitutes the earliest documented record for Ontario (Wormington 2003a). This observation was thoroughly outlined by Dorey (1933).

**Lazuli Bunting** *Passerina amoena* **(7)**

2004 - one, definitive alternate, male, 29-31 May, Bells Corners, *Ottawa* (Ian P. Clark, Lois I. Knaggs, Paul Lagasi, found by Derek Hasler) – photos on file.

**Painted Bunting** *Passerina ciris* **(19)**

2004 - one, definitive alternate, male, 12 May, Cherry Valley, *Prince Edward* (Brian Durell, found by Suzanne White) – photo on file.

- one, definitive alternate, male, 5-9 August, Normandale, *Norfolk* (Ron C. Ridout, William W. Watson, Brandon R. Holden, found by Linda Whiting, Jim Whiting) – photos on file.

**Dickcissel** *Spiza americana* **North Only (14)**

2004 - one, alternate, male, 1 June, Atikokan, *Rainy River* (David H. Elder, found by Ralph Brown).

**Great-tailed Grackle** *Quiscalus mexicanus* **(3)**

2004 - one, basic, female, 7-8 February, Turkey Point, *Norfolk* (Ron C. Ridout, found by Gregor Beck, Kevin Kavanagh) – photos on file.

There are two previous records of this species in Ontario. These include a bird at Atikokan, *Rainy River*, on 7-25 October 1987 (Elder 1988) and one at Port Rowan/Port Royal, *Norfolk*, from 19 November 1988 to 6 January

1989 (Wormington and Curry 1990). An additional record of a bird in this species group (Great-tailed/Boat-tailed Grackle, *Q. mexicanus/major*) is from Honey Harbour, *Muskoka*, on 29 August 1999 (Roy 2000).

**House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus* Before 1978, South Before 1995, North (12)**

- 1977 - one, basic, male, 21 March, Barriefield, *Frontenac* (Gwen L. Woods).
- 1976 - one, female, 8-17 April, Rose Hill, *Niagara* (Harold H. Axtell, George K. Peck) – photos on file.  
 - one, female, 16 April, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Jeffrey A. Greenhouse, John G. Keenleyside).  
 - one, female, 10-12 May, Marathon, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott) – photos on file.  
 - one, female, 22 May, Presqu'ile Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (Clive E. Goodwin).
- 1972 - one, female, 27 August, Prince Edward Point, *Prince Edward* (Helen R. Quilliam, Ron D. Weir).  
 - one, female, 15 October, Dundas Marsh, *Hamilton* (Alan Wormington, also found by Daniel S. Bastaja).

The two records from 1972 constitute the first two occurrences in Ontario.

## Not Accepted Records

### Origin Uncertain

Birds in this category are considered by the Committee to be correctly identified, but their origin is suspect. These birds may have escaped or may have been released from captivity. However, if new evidence suggesting wild origin becomes available, such reports may be reconsidered by the Committee.

- 2004 - Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*), one, 4 May, Silver Islet, *Thunder Bay* (William Climie) – photo on file.  
 - European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), one, male, 2 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.
- 2003 - Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), one, 27 October, Long Point (Tip), *Norfolk* (Christian Friis, Robert Henri).  
 - European Goldfinch, one, 10 June, Sutton West, *York* (Douglas Brown, also found by Lenora Brown).

The number of reports of Eurasian finches and other songbirds has increased over the past few years, both here in Ontario, and in adjacent states. European Goldfinch is the most frequently reported species, but, as can be seen above, other species are appearing, as well. It is assumed, at this point in time, that these involve escaped birds, and indeed, rumours have surfaced of bird dealers losing or releasing these species. Often, observers of these European birds do not document their sightings. However, it is worth-

while to do so for two reasons. Firstly, the documentation helps to confirm the extent of the occurrences and the species involved. Secondly, evidence may be forthcoming at some time in the future of a true pattern of vagrancy for some of these species, and the documented reports may be valuable in testing such a pattern. Other species involved in adjacent jurisdictions include Eurasian Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*), European Greenfinch (*C. chloris*), and Linnet (*C. cannabina*).

## Not Accepted Records

### Identification Uncertain

The documentation received for the following reports generally was found not to be detailed enough to eliminate similar species unequivocally. In a great many cases, Committee members felt that the species being described probably was correctly identified, but that the details provided in the report, perhaps due to the circumstances of the observation conditions, were insufficient. It should be noted that any of these reports may be re-submitted if additional documentation becomes available.

- 2004
- Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), one, 2 August, Moon's Bay, *Simcoe*.
  - Frigatebird sp. (*Fregata* sp.), one, 2 August, Sandbanks Provincial Park, *Prince Edward*.
  - Great "White" Heron (*Ardea herodias*), one, 17 August, Cambridge, *Waterloo*.
  - Little Blue Heron, two, spring/summer, Pelham, *Niagara*.
  - Black Vulture, one, 7 May, Elmdale, *Essex*.
  - Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*), one, 14 May, Tilbury, *Essex*.
  - Ross's Goose, one, 6 April, Mountsberg Conservation Area, *Hamilton*.
  - Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*), three, 13 May, Minnitaki, *Kenora*.
  - Eurasian Collared-Dove, one, 9 July, Mississauga, *Peel*.
  - Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), one, 24 August, Bancroft, *Hastings*.
  - Kirtland's Warbler, one, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Swainson's Warbler, one, 20 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*), one, 1 June, Kagawong, *Manitoulin*.
  - Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), six, 4 April, Four Mile Lake, *Nipissing*.
  - Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*), one, 29 June, West Pen Peninsula, *Kenora*.
- 2003
- Little Blue Heron, two, spring/summer, Pelham, *Niagara*.
  - White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), three, 15 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Mississippi Kite, one, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Mississippi Kite, one, 19 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent*.
  - Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), one, 12-27 November, Alice Township, *Renfrew*.

This well documented bird generated a great deal of discussion among gull experts inside and outside the province, but unfortunately, there is no consensus on its identity, or even its age (both first basic and second basic plumages having been proposed by different experts).

- Mew Gull, one, 18 August, Unionville, *York*.
- Gull-billed Tern (*Sterna nilotica*), two, 25 September, north of Bewdley, *Northumberland*.
- Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*), 23 May, Loughborough Lake, *Frontenac*.
- Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*), one, 26 April, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Chuck-will's-widow, one, 30 April, Newbury, *Middlesex*.
- Virginia's Warbler (*Vermivora virginiae*), one, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.

## Corrections/Updates to Previous OBRC Reports

### 2003 Report (Ontario Birds 22: 54–74)

- under Eared Grebe, change “29-30 May” to “29-31 May”.
- under Black-capped Petrel, 27 September, add “also found by Innis Miline, Eric Holden” after “Brandon R. Holden”.
- under Cattle Egret, mid October, change “Blake Township” to “Jarvis River”.
- under Ross's Goose, 2003, change “Pendleton” to “Bourget”.
- under Common Eider, 10 and 19 May, add “first alternate, female” after “one”.
- under California Gull, 2002, third basic, amend the dates to “19 November – 8 December” and change finders to “found by Daniel R. Salisbury, John G. Keenleyside”.
- under California Gull, 2002, definitive basic, amend the dates to “23 November – 29 December”.
- under Eurasian Collared-Dove, Marysville, change “5-24 May” to “5-31 May”.
- under Chuck-will's-widow, change “28-29 May” to “28 May – 10 June”.
- under Hermit Warbler, Cabot Head, add “first basic” before “female”.
- under Kirtland's Warbler, 17 May, add “definitive alternate” before “male”.
- under Spotted Towhee, 1993, amend the dates to “1992/93 – 27 December - early March”.
- under Blue Grosbeak, add “Stuart A. Mackenzie” after “J. Burke Korol”, and add “photos on file”.

### 2002 Report (Ontario Birds 21: 54–76)

- under Northern Gannet, change “one” to “two”.
- under White-winged Dove, 19 October 2001, add “photos on file”.
- under Lark Sparrow, 15 August 2001, add “(Tip)” after “Long Point”, and add “photos on file”.

### 2001 Report (Ontario Birds 20: 54-74)

- under Black Vulture, 8-10 May, add “John Reaume” before “Ron Tozer”, and add “also found by Scott Fairbairn” after “R. Doug McRae”.

### 1989 Report (Ontario Birds 8: 4–33)

- under Rufous Hummingbird, 1987, add “found by Mr. and Mrs. R. Bennett” after “Kathy Nihei”.

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