

Quebec Region

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This summer was characterized by warm weather across most of the Region, but while precipitation was below average in central and northern Quebec it was above average in the southern and eastern regions. Local thunderstorms were the cause of most of the precipitation. Some of these storms were particularly violent in southwestern Quebec and were sometimes accompanied by tornados, a rare event in Quebec. An exception to this pattern was the Magdalen Is. where July was remarkably dry and warm.

Abbreviation: C.W.S. (*Canadian Wildlife Service*).

Loons to Waterfowl

The appearance of an Arctic/Pacific Loon at Pointe-des-Monts, *Saguenay* June 4 was not totally unexpected (G. Bouchard). This was not the case, however, for the breeding-plumaged **Eared Grebe**, the fifth for the Region, that showed up on L. Malbaie in the Laurentides Wildlife Reserve July 23+ (YA, m.ob.). A decline of the unique population of Horned Grebes in e. North America has been noted. Only 7 pairs bred in the Magdalen Is., while ≤ 12 pairs did so in 1993. On the other

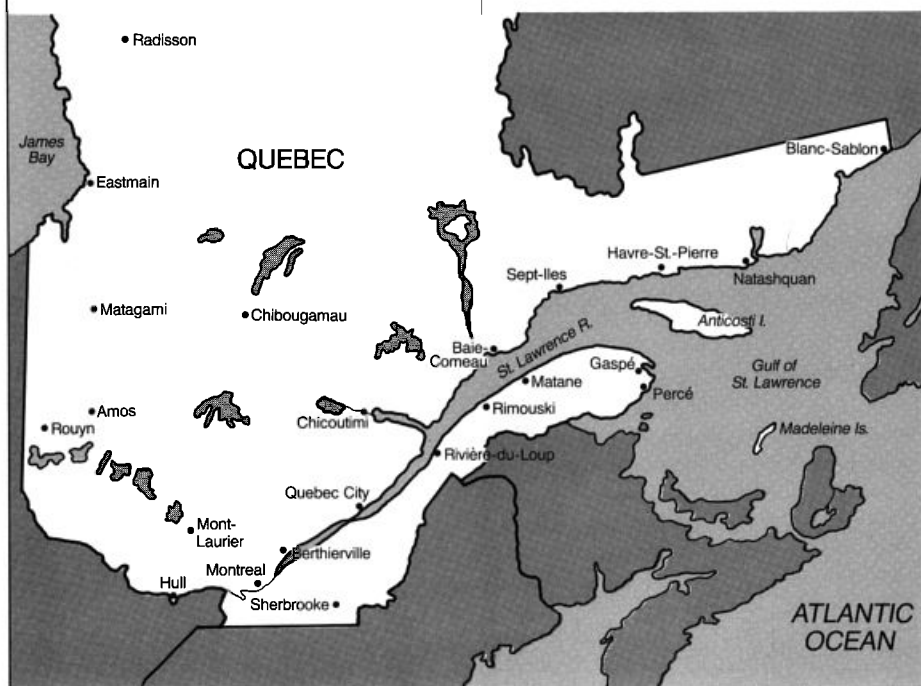
hand, 27 pairs of Pied-billed Grebes, a potential competitor which was first reported breeding in the archipelago in 1972, were found (FS, A. Richard; C.W.S.). An intriguing sighting was of a Double-crested Cormorant of the w. population, with white tufts, sitting on a nest near Baie-Sainte-Catherine, *Charlevoix* June 6 (JFR). A Least Bittern visited Montmagny July 1, right across from Cap-Tourmente where the species is known to nest (J. Lachance), but another territorial bird throughout July at L'Isle-Verte, 150 km farther east provided only the 2nd summer record for the Lower St. Lawrence (PF, m.ob.). At least six Great Egrets were reported e. of their limited breeding range in s. Quebec; one of them reached Havre-Saint-Pierre, *Duplessis* June 6 (P. Pichette). Vagrant southern waders included a Cattle Egret at Longueuil, *Montreal* June 15–17 (A. Charest) and a Glossy Ibis at Cacouna, *Rivière-du-Loup* in July (MR, m.ob.). Two sub-ad. Tundra Swans were identified at Val-d'Or, *Abitibi* July 29 (S. Guay). Other unusual summer waterfowl sightings involved a Mute Swan at Akwesasne, *Huntingdon* June 24 (MB) and a Barnacle Goose of unknown origin at Pointe Saint-Pierre, *Gaspé* June 7 (J.M. Béliveau). Every summer new names are added to the list of localities harboring nesting Canada Geese; this year, a bird was sitting on a nest at Oka, *Deux-Montagnes* in July (M. McIntosh) and 2 broods were discovered at Aylmer, *Pontiac* June 15 (D. Toussaint). Our knowledge of the distribution of the Wood Duck was enriched by a sighting of two males present at Baie-Comeau, *Saguenay* throughout the summer (GC). The only Eur. Wigeon was a male June 12–July 9 at La Salle, *Montreal*,

where the species has turned up almost annually in the last decade (MB, m.ob.). A ♀ Am. Wigeon with her brood at Baie-Comeau June 8 was a rare event for the North Shore (GC). Field work on Surf Scoters conducted by the C.W.S. in June–August at L. Malbaie, Laurentides Wildlife Reserve, yielded a maximum of 109 adults counted in June, 9 more nests, and a maximum count of 80 ducklings July 18; that is fewer than in 1993, when 139 ducklings were counted. An aerial survey in July showed that aside from the L. Malbaie population, only a few pairs were located on 8 other lakes in that general area (E&A Reed, L. Morrier, L. Lesage, J.P. Savard, YA).

Diurnal Raptors to Terns

Turkey Vultures were regularly encountered in the Quebec City region, e. of their current breeding range (LM). The easternmost bird was soaring over Tadoussac, *Saguenay* June 9 (J. Normandin). An ad. Bald Eagle photographed at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu was carrying a blue leg band and a radio-transmitter, indicating that it originated from one of the United States' release programs (L. L'Écuyer). An estimated 15 Red-shouldered Hawks at Rimouski in mid-June was puzzling since the closest known breeding locality is La Pocatière, 160 km farther west (R. Pitre, GG).

SA As in 1993, the C.W.S. conducted surveys of breeding Yellow Rails along the St. Lawrence R. Birds were found from Dundee, near the Ontario border, to the Gaspé Pen. A total of 45 individuals (all males) were captured and banded from May 16–August 23, including 11 at Dundee, one at Cap-Tourmente, 23 at Île aux Grues, Montmagny, six at Cacouna, three in the bay of Gaspé, and one at Coin-du-Banc, Gaspé. Two rails from Dundee were recovered at Île aux Grues, 400 km downstream. The first one was banded at Dundee May 25 and recaptured at Île aux Grues June 15 and July 21, where it probably bred. The other individual was captured at Dundee June 30 and recaptured at Île aux Grues August 22. Only one of the 21 Yellow Rails banded in 1993 was recaptured this year, in the same area (Cacouna) where it was banded last year. Furthermore, for the first time in 48 years, breeding was confirmed along the St. Lawrence R., since 4 nests containing eggs were found at Île aux Grues. Breeding of this species had previously been confirmed on only 2 occasions in the province, and at the same station, Coin-du-Banc, where L. McL. Terrill found one nest in 1940 (Auk 60: 171–180) and another one in 1946 (unpublished data) (MR, P. Laporte, L. Choinière).



While calling for Sora, observers were surprised when a territorial pair of Virginia Rail showed up looking for the intruder at L. Provencher, *Baie-Comeau* June 12–19 (GC, m.ob.), providing the easternmost breeding evidence for the North Shore. Displaced Sandhill Cranes included singles at Saint-Zénon, *Berthier* July 21 (R. Duquette); La Pocatière, *Kamouraska* June 15 (CM, FG); Cacouna June 12 (JI, SC); L'Isle-Verte June 22–July 18 (P. Petitgrew, M.C. Mongeau); Luceville, *Matapédia* (*vide* JRP) and L. Matapédia (R. Desjardins, *vide* JRP), both in late July; Saint-Honoré, *Saguenay* June 1–10 (D. Morissette); and, finally, four at Delisle, *Lac-Saint-Jean* June 23 (H. Bouchard).

Piping Plover surveys on the Magdalen Is. provided a slight but encouraging increase for the 3rd consecutive year, with 50 pairs counted (BL, CWS). Shorebirds had a rather uneventful season, the most interesting sightings being a Marbled Godwit at L'Isle-Verte July 17 (M.A. Lemieux *et al.*), another in Gamache Bay, *Anticosti I.*, June 25 (M. Lavallée), and a very early Stilt Sandpiper in alternate plumage at Cacouna June 23 (JFR, FG). Uncommon small larids included three Laughing Gulls: singles at Les Escoumins, *Saguenay* June 4–24 (A. Côté *et al.*); Trois-Pistoles, *Rivière-du-Loup* July 1 (GG, *vide* JRP); and Cacouna July 5 (GG, m.ob.). Three Little Gulls were sighted: one at Île du Petit Pot, *Kamouraska* June 5 (CM *et al.*), another at Les Escoumins June 24 (JI, SC), and the third seen from the Trois-Pistoles-Les Escoumins ferry July 17 (ND *et al.*). The only out-of-range Com. Black-headed Gull appeared at Les Escoumins June 24 (JI, SC); although 3–4 pairs were present on their breeding ground in the Magdalen Is., no evidence of nesting was recorded (*vide* FS). In Quebec City, it was the first year of a triennial program aimed at controlling the reproduction of 17,000 pairs of Ring-billed Gulls nesting on the landfill site of the Daishowa paper company. This year more than 100,000 eggs were destroyed. Authorities of the municipality and of the company hope that the gulls will abandon the site in a few years. Summer sightings of the Lesser Black-backed Gull continue to increase; two visited Rivière-Ouelle, *Kamouraska* June 20 (RB), and four different birds were identified at the Laterrière landfill site near Chicoutimi, between June 1–July 30 (CC, GS). An unprecedented 15 Caspian Terns were counted at LaSalle July 12 (PB). In the Magdalen Is., there was no evidence of nesting for the threatened Roseate Tern, although two birds were present July 4 (FS *et al.*). Poor nesting success was reported at

Com. Tern colonies in the archipelago, presumably as a result of predation by foxes, whose population has flourished after the trapping season was closed by provincial authorities in early 1990s (*vide* FS). A Black Tern was observed at Havre Saint-Pierre, *Mingan* July 1 (CG *et al.*).

Doves to Thrushes

Although there are 2 previous records for the province, the **White-winged Dove** seen at a Lennoxville feeder in the Eastern Township June 12–15 was the first to be documented by a photograph (C. Lacroix, S. Brulotte). Night surveys for Long-eared Owls conducted during July in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region produced an unsuspected count of 59 individuals comprising 27 broods (B. Dumont, M. Savard, CG). The only "exotic" flycatcher for this season and last spring was an ad. Say's Phoebe which appeared briefly at Saint-Pierre, *Île d'Orléans* June 2 (J.-M. & J. Giroux). The Sedge Wren, a species of special concern for the Region, was reported at a new locality, where one bird appeared at Elmside, *Outaouais* July 17 (DS, D. Dallaire). Night surveys for the Yellow Rail revealed 16 singing Sedge Wrens at Lac-Saint-François N.W.R. near Dundee June 29; a bird carrying food was later located at nearby Hopkins Pt., June 30 (MR). The Marsh Wren seems now established e. of Quebec City; again this summer single singing males were reported from La Pocatière (C. Auchu) and Cacouna (MR, m.ob.).

A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was discovered at Île Bizard Regional Park, *Montreal* June 11 (P. Tarassof), while a nest was found July 11 at Oka (R. Lemyre, *vide* ND), where the species has already nested. An adult was carrying food at Pointe du Gouvernement, *Upper-Richelieu* July 17 (PB). Adding to last spring's impressive list of N. Wheat-ear records was one at Rapide-Danseur, *Abitibi* in late May (R. Deschênes, *vide* P. Drapeau) and a female at Pointe-au-Père N.W.R., *Rimouski* June 4 (A. Brisson). Two adult and a fully grown juvenile still showing down were carefully studied at Aupaluk, *Ungava*, at the n. tip of the Region July 12–13 (Y. Gauthier). Bad news for the beloved E. Blubird; many pairs failed to return and bad weather had a negative effect on nesting success in the Outaouais, Montreal, Trois-Rivières, Granby, Quebec, and Lower St. Lawrence regions (PB, D. Asselin, PF). Sightings were scarce and it is suspected that the species may have suffered from last winter's severe cold. The existence of a small but probably regular population of "Bicknell's" Gray-cheeked Thrush in s. Quebec was exemplified again by the discovery of a new locality hosting

this species: La Montagne Noire (altitude 2900 feet/885 m) near Saint-Donat, in the Laurentians, where a singing male was heard June 18 (R. Guillet, m.ob.); and at Valinouët Mt., *Saguenay* June 3 (CG, CC). A pair of Am. Robins fledged three albinistic young at Rawdon, *Joliette* in late July (S. Poirier)

Shrikes to Sparrows

The only Loggerhead Shrikes were single birds at Le Gardeur, *L'Assomption*, where breeding occurred 2 years ago (G. Pauzé), and Cap-Tourmente (m.ob.). Rarely reported e. of Quebec City, a Yellow-throated Vireo ventured to L. Macpes, *Rimouski*, July 26 (R. St-Laurent). The only unusual warbler of the season was an ad. ♂ Hooded Warbler at Sainte-Luce, *Rimouski* June 5 (L.B.&R. Claveau). A ♂ N. Cardinal at a Cabano feeder June 17 represented a 2nd consecutive summer record for this area. Indigo Buntings made a good showing again with birds reported e. of their range in late May, June, and early July as far as Saint-Fulgence, *Chicoutimi*, La Pocatière, Saint-Eusèbe, *Témiscouata*, Dégelis, *Témiscouata*, Sainte-Blandine, *Rimouski*, Baie-Comeau and Anticosti I. A singing Rufous-sided Towhee at Pointe-Platon, *Lotbinière* July 5 (J.L. Lafolette) was e. of its known breeding range. Five Grasshopper Sparrows were found at Shawville, *Gatineau* June 4 (JD). The LeConte's Sparrow was observed at a new locality in w. Quebec, where a singing male was located at Fabre, *Témiscamingue* June 26 (DS), while several individuals showed up and likely bred at localities in the Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean region and at Lac-Saint-François and Cap-Tourmente N.W.R., Île aux Grues, Cacouna, and Pointe-au-Père. Night surveys at Cacouna revealed at least 23 singing ♂ Sharp-tailed Sparrows in late June (MR). White-crowned Sparrows summering s. of range included two at Chicoutimi June 4 (CG *et al.*), one at a feeder at Rimouski June 29 (GG), and one at Sainte-Luce, July 8–30 (R.&L.B. Claveau).

A female-type Yellow-headed Blackbird showed up at Rivière-Ouelle June 21 (RB). A ♂ Orchard Oriole was sighted at Chandler, *Baie des Chaleurs* May 30–June 2 (*vide* S. Marchand). A pair of House Finches was observed in July at Bonaventure, *Gaspé*, but breeding couldn't be confirmed (J.M. Pitre). Crossbills appeared in good numbers in the Lower St. Lawrence and La Pocatière regions and in the Laurentides Wildlife Reserve, where Red Crossbills accompanied flocks of White-winged. Courtship flight, song, and breeding behavior were reported for both species, along with recently fledged juveniles and adults feeding young.

Exotics

An Eur. Goldfinch stayed at a feeder at Saint-Thomas, *Joliette* July 7–9 (P. Garceau).

Addendum

A first spring ♂ Blue Grosbeak was reported from Anticosti I., May 9, 1993 (†DM).

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New England Region

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In many ways, New England's hot, dry, and generally sunny June and July weather mirrored conditions last summer. In Massachusetts, the average heat during the period was 74.7° F—a new record—beating 74.4° F set in 1983. A Boston heat wave between July 19–26 tied for the second longest on record. June and July were respectively the third and second hottest in 124 years; June was also the tenth driest. At least breeding birds did not have to contend with a cool, rainy nesting season!

Preliminary information obtained from the National Biological Survey's 1994 Atlantic Coast Colonial Waterbird Survey provided some interesting insight into changes in southern New England cormorant and heron populations. When completed next year, this data base should prove invaluable in assessing Regional trends in colonial waterbirds when it is compared with similar census efforts conducted in 1977 and 1984. Similarly, grassland birds in Massachusetts continued to receive closer scrutiny than ever before as the Massachusetts Audubon Society continued to census grassland bird populations and to develop management strategies for their protection.

Among the unexpected rarities of early summer, outstanding luminaries included **White-faced Storm-Petrel**, Little Egret, a first ever Regional Snowy Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, breeding Henslow's Sparrows, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

Loons to Cormorants

Among the scattered reports of summering Red-throated Loons, one at Milford Pt., CT July 16–31 was locally uncommon so late in the season (BK). Undoubtedly the most surprising grebe report was the successful nesting of Pied-billed Grebes in the Fenway section of Boston, where a

pair raised one young at Leverett Pond during June and July (E. Crowley, v.o.). This not only represents the sole breeding confirmation in Massachusetts this year, but also the first in Boston in at least several decades.

Tubenose reports were scattered and numbers were inconsistent throughout the period—a continuing condition since the collapse of local sand lance (*Ammodytes* sp.) populations in the early 1980s. The single N. Fulmar report was one off Mt. Desert Rock, ME July 9 (Z. Klyver). The warm-water shearwaters, Cory's and Audubon's, were best represented by >120 of the former off Nantucket I., July 28 (B. Perkins) and three of the latter 30 mi. s. of Block I., RI (DF, CA). On a charter trip from Gloucester, MA to the continental shelf edge near Hydrographer Canyon, 600 Greater Shearwaters and 55 Leach's Storm-Petrels were recorded July 5–8 (MD *et al.*), while on Stellwagen Bank, a maximum count of 50 Greater Shearwaters was tallied July 31 (B. Volkle). Wilson's Storm-Petrel numbers were unimpressive except for >1000 close to shore at Nantucket I., July 20–25 (B. Perkins) and 254 at Jeffrey's Ledge July 24 (D. Chickering). More outstanding was a White-faced Storm-Petrel in the vicinity of Oceanographer Canyon July 6 (MD *et al.*). The affinity of this species for warm water upwellings near the continental shelf edge seems to be increasingly apparent.

A Connecticut report of an Am. White Pelican at Sherwood Island S.P., June 17 (C. Barnard, R. Soffer, R. Winkler) was unique in the Region. The growth of Rhode Island's

