

Atlantic Provinces Region

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A tranquil season in Atlantic Canada. Temperatures were a little above normal in the southern half of the Region. Birdwatching in Atlantic activity areas seemed to wane with the summer heat. At first glance the list of rarities may seem below par, but when you look more closely, you realize there is an amazing list of off-course birds to be found in the summer. Birds such as Little Egret, Ross' Goose, Black Vulture, American Oystercatcher, Black-necked Stilt, Spotted Redshank, Black-tailed Godwit, and Chuck-will's-widow are each, on their own, spine-tingling finds. White-winged Crossbills responded in dramatic fashion to a very heavy cone crop in most of the Region. Reporting, as usual, was skimpy during the summer season.

Abbreviations: SPM (*Saint Pierre et Miquelon*).

Loons to Waterfowl

The isolated nesting site for Red-throated Loon on Miquelon, SPM had one nest with one egg June 1 (RE). Taking a holiday in the off season, a Red-necked Grebe spent most of June at an out-the-way inland location at Wolfville, NS (JT). Early for the Region and rare in the Bay of Fundy, a Cory's Shearwater was reported off Brier I., NS July 22 (KT, CC). The Greater Shearwater masses that were coming to Newfoundland in June and July to gorge on the caplin run seemed to be adjusting to a later and smaller run of this fish in late July/early August. There were 20,000 Greater Shearwaters July 29 near Argentinia, Placentia Bay, NF (BMT). A Wilson's Storm-Petrel off Covehead Hr., PEI July 23 was a provincial rarity (DM).

A Least Bittern with two young was reported June 22 from *Charleston*, NB; one of the few provincial breeding records of this rare and elusive bird (VD). The Little Egret found at Louisbourg, NS May 13 was last sighted July 7 (*fide* DMc). Newfoundland's 2nd Tricolored Heron was nicely photographed at St. Paul's June 3 (HM).

More routine s. heron sightings are summarized in Table 1.

An ad. Ross' Goose at Harvey Bank, NB June 1-3 turned into an unusual snack for a Bald Eagle (DC *et al.*). Although out of season, the observers sensed it was probably a wild vagrant based on the bird's nervousness, being unbanded, tired appearance, and good plumage. There are no previous summer records for the Region. A pair of Wood Ducks was extralimital at Miquelon, SPM June 2 & 6 (DD, RE). An average number of summer Eur. Wigeons was seen, with singles at Cape Jourimain, NB June 23 (CA); Inkerman, NB July 14 (R-AC); and a male in the lower Grand Codroy R., NF June 10 (PL *et al.*). Surprisingly, summer is turning out to be the best time for Redheads in the Region, with one June 14-21 Saint John, NB (IS) and two July 14 at Inkerman, NB (R-AC). A flock of 50 Black Scoters through June and July at Mary's Pt, NB provided a record-high number in summer for this well-watched location, and anywhere in the Region s. of Labrador at this season (DC).

Raptors to Alcids

A Black Vulture flew over St. Martins, NB June 11 (TS). Most interesting among the reports of Turkey Vultures from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia was six feeding at the dump in Hampton, NB in July (AG). A Cooper's Hawk nest fledged four young near Pokiok, NB for the 2nd confirmed provincial and Regional breeding record (SM, PP). Most intriguing was a report of an ad. Golden Eagle from a mountainous area near Inverness, NS July 1 (BMy, MD).

In addition to the main Yellow Rail breeding site at Grand Lake, NB, singles were heard at 2 locations in the Tantramar Marshes, NB (ST) and at Inkerman, NB (*fide* HC), all in July.

Three broods of Piping Plovers on the Isthmus, SPM furnished an encouraging local record (RE, DL). Still very rare, but becoming annual, American Oystercatcher was seen at Cape Sable I., NS June 22 (JN *et al.*) and Kent I., NB June 25 (*fide* DC). Two Black-necked Stilts were nicely photographed at Cole Hr., NS June 16 & 17, constituting the 3rd provincial record (IM *et al.*). There were 2 reports of Spotted Redshank from Nova Scotia: an adult in breeding plumage at St. Mary's, Isle Madame, July 9 (VK, SC) and one at Wallace Bay Bird



Black-necked Stilts at Cole Harbour, Halifax County, Nova Scotia, June 16, 1995. Third provincial record. Photograph/Ian McLaren.

Sanctuary July 23 (JT *et al.*). Neither report was accompanied by details. There is one previous record for the province. A Willet straying beyond the normal breeding range was at Grand Codroy R., NF June 10 (PL *et al.*) A Black-tailed Godwit June 16 photographed on the Isthmus, SPM was probably a leftover from the spring influx of Icelandic species in the extreme e. part of the Region (PH, *fide* RE). Annual in recent years but still exceptional in the Region, a Marbled Godwit was at Cape Sable I., NS July 23-29 (MN *et al.*). High counts of Semipalmated Sandpipers from traditional staging locations on the Bay of Fundy were 200,000 July 30 at Johnson Mills, NB (RS) and 100,000 July 29 at Evangaline Beach, NS (JT). Two Purple Sandpipers on Miquelon, SPM June 29 must have been over-summering birds (LJ). An extraordinary concentration of 15,000 Short-billed Dowitchers was at Cape Sable I., NS July 16 (MN). A stray Wilson's Phalarope was found at Langlade, SPM June 5 (MDe, RE).

Single Laughing Gulls were at Port Elgin, NB July 15 (DM) and St. John's, NF late June (JS). A new breeding location for Com. Black-headed Gull was nearly established at Isthmus, SPM when a pair with an empty nest was found June 30 (LJ). Breeding came closer to being confirmed at Bellevue Beach, NF with a flying juvenile July 26 (BMT). Good concentrations of summering Bonaparte's Gull, typically from the Northumberland Strait, were 60 July 6 at Cap Bimet, NB (ST) and 30 July 23 at Wallace, NS (BMy

Table 1: Summer Heron Sightings

	NB	PEI	NS	NF	SPM
Great Egret	1		1	1	
Snowy Egret			2		
Little Blue Heron		1	2		1
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron			1		

et al.). No details, other than a wedge-shaped tail, were received with a report of a 1st-summer Ross' Gull at Isle Madame, NS in July.

News concerning nesting terns in Nova Scotia was generally favorable. Roseate Terns held in with 2 pairs nesting at Machias Seal I., NB (DD) and 33 nests at West Pubnico, NS (*vide* BMy). The pair of Black Terns returned to Mirande Lake, Miquelon, SPM for the 4th consecutive summer, but there was no evidence of repeat breeding this year (RE *et al.*). Three nests of Razorbill on South Wolf I., NB provided a new nesting location, only the 3rd in the Bay of Fundy (*vide* DC).

Owls to Waxwings

A pair of N. Hawk Owls nested near Minto, NB for a rare provincial breeding record (DG). Incredibly, for the 2nd consecutive summer a Chuck-will's-widow was singing on Sable I., NS June 26 until at least July 4 (ZL). The abundance of Alder Flycatcher in Nova Scotia was illustrated by a tally of 180 June 18 in *Antigonish* (FL, BMy). Five Willow Flycatchers were singing at 4 locations in s. New Brunswick (m.ob.); while one at Brier I., NS June 11 provided only the 5th province record (KM). The breeding range of Least Flycatcher was extended 450 mi to the northeast with the discovery of a nest with three young and another pair feeding four fledglings at Goose Bay, Lab., July 14 (BMt).

The Carolina Wren present at Truro, NS since November 1994 was singing up to July 1 (RS). A pair of House Wrens fledged four young in a Fredericton, NB backyard July 5 for what was probably the first successful nesting in the Region (SS *et al.*). Another pair at Gagetown, NB evicted Tree Swallows from a nest box and began their own nest; outcome unknown at deadline (EI). A very unseasonable ♂ N. Wheatear was at Cape Spear, NF June 27 (TB, KK); one aerial song display at Hopedale, Lab., June 11 was within the breeding range (BMt). After recent summer visits of Gray Catbird, the first nesting record for St. Pierre, SPM was established with the discovery of a nest with three young July 17 (RE). A very scarce breeder in New Brunswick, singing Brown Thrashers were found at Harvey Bank June 2 (DC, JE) and Eel Lake, Grand Manan I., July 7 (*vide* DC). A rare mid-summer occurrence of Bohemian Waxwing was documented in a black spruce fen at Terra Nova N. P., NF July 24 (BMt). It was a banner year for Cedar Waxwings across the Region with two pairs as far north as Goose Bay, Lab., June 11 (BMt).

Vireos to Finches

There were two Warbling Vireos at N. Winsloe, PEI June 10, where rare at any season (GP). A Blue-winged Warbler at River-ton, PEI June 6 was a provincial rarity and furnished a rare spring record for the Region (R&J Kneebone). A rare spring migrant Orange-crowned Warbler was at North L., PEI June 3 (RC *et al.*) A singing Nashville Warbler at Goose Bay, Lab., June 11 was well n. of the known breeding range (BMt). John Gibson of Plum Point, NF photographed an unusual warbler in his backyard May 23; after examination by experts it was proved to be a ♀ hybrid Hermit x Townsend's Warbler! This is probably the first record of this frequent hybrid in the east. Interestingly, 3 of the 5 records of Hermit Warbler in the Region are for spring, yet most of the >10 Townsend's Warblers are from fall. A pair of Pine Warblers feeding young at Upper Brockway, NB added another

breeding record to the handful that exist for the province (JWi). Exploratory warblers in Newfoundland included a singing Canada Warbler at Gros Morne N.P., July 13 (BMo) and a N. Parula in Terra Nova N.P. singing through June (m.ob.).

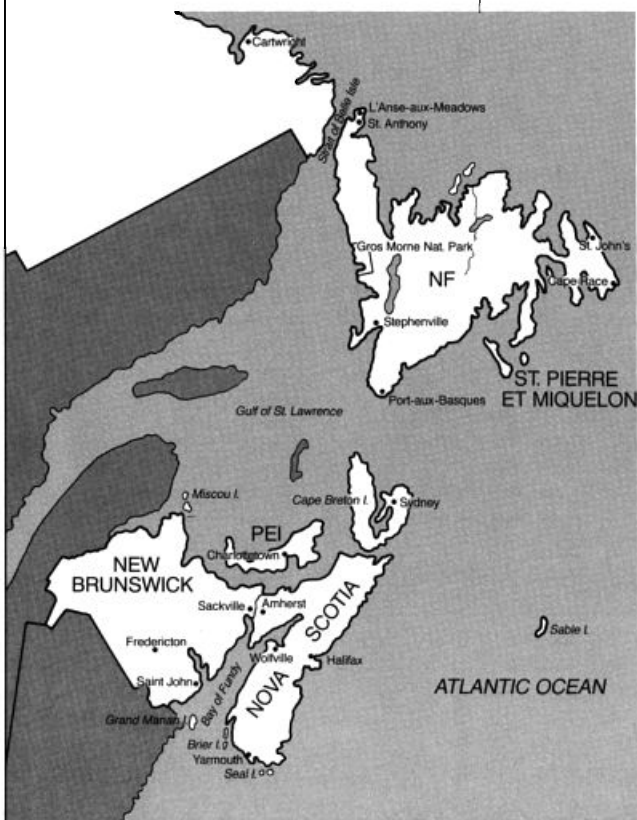
A ♂ Indigo Bunting June 2 at a feeder in Charlottetown, NF was left over from a light spring influx (*vide* GS). A vague report of a ♂ Painted Bunting near Hillsborough, NB June 12 fit into a June pattern of occurrence that has recently emerged (*vide* DC).

SA White-winged Crossbills exploded into action because of a massive cone crop across the Region. They were numerous in much of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in June and July. The most dramatic scene happened in Newfoundland. Virtually no White-winged Crossbills had been seen in the province in 1995 until June 15. By then it was evident, from the yellow pollen-stained shorelines of every water body and the budding young cones, that a truly monstrous crop was developing. By June 20, virtually every Newfoundland birdwatcher was reporting flocks of 20-30 White-winged Crossbills flying east—sometimes stopping to feed, but mostly just flying. No singing. All adults. By mid-July the flocks ceased and woods everywhere were frantic with the ringing trills of White-winged Crossbills in full song. No corner of the province was spared. Goose Bay, Lab. and even patches of spruce forest as far north as Nain were swarming with singing White-winged Crossbills in July. The first fledged young began appearing in the last half of August. The singing stopped in early September. End of round one. If all goes according to previous record, the singing should start again in January.

Other finches took little notice of the impending cone crop and went about business as normal. Red Crossbills were quiet, being seen in normal numbers in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Pine Siskins were fairly numerous in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

Addendum

After consulting with identification experts Jon Dunn and Will Russell, the New Brunswick Birds Records Committee has accepted a record of ♂ Shiny Cowbird photographed at a bird feeder at Lamèque, Gloucester, Aug. 5, 1993 by Gérard and Denise Benoit, providing a first for Canada.



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Quebec Region

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Summer 1995 was hot and dry throughout most of the province except the extreme southern part, where the rainfall in July was slightly above normal. The hot weather was felt everywhere, even in the Gaspé Peninsula, where temperatures in the 90s° F were not uncommon. Although the nice weather was much welcomed by vacationers, farmers were adversely affected, especially in the south, where in June Montreal recorded 18 consecutive days without rain. The most serious problems, however, occurred in the Gaspé Peninsula, where forest fires raged for much of the summer, destroying large tracks of forest. At first glance, the drought had no negative impact on the nesting success of most species.

And, finally, the number of rarities reported in July in eastern Quebec was impressive, particularly in the Magdalen Islands and in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Loons to Waterfowl

Large numbers of non-breeding Red-throated Loons wandered upstream into the St. Lawrence R. estuary, where 93 were counted at Rivière-Ouelle, *Kamouraska*, July 7 (CA). The discovery of an Arctic/Pa-

cific Loon in alternate plumage at L'Anse-Pleureuse, *Gaspé*, July 23 was a notable event (RF).

A count of six N. Fulmars July 17 in the Sainte-Marie Archipelago along the Lower North Shore was noteworthy (CN). Since 1972, the Manx Shearwater has been recorded in small numbers almost annually in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and/or in the estuary, mainly during ferry crossings. The Sainte-Marie Archipelago seems to be an attractive site for this species. From only a single bird seen there in July 1989 during a Canadian Wildlife Service survey of seabird colonies, the number rose to seven in 1990 and a remarkable 41 this year tallied between July 17–Aug. 4, including 15 July 21 (CN). It would certainly be interesting to investigate this area in the near future for the possibility of local breeding. Three Manx Shearwaters were also seen from the ferry between Rivière-au-Renard and Anticosti I., July 30 (AC). Both Wilson's and Leach's storm-petrels were regularly observed in small numbers from the above-mentioned ferry and also in the Magdalen Is. in July (m.ob.). An ad. Great Cormorant in basic plumage strayed upstream on the St. Lawrence R. to reach Rivière-Ouelle June 15 (CA).

The Least Bittern is making more and more incursions into the Lower St. Lawrence region: A bird was heard and seen from June 1–July 4 at L. Macpès, *Rimouski* (Y. Gauthier *et al.*), one was at Saint-Anaclet, *Rimouski*, July 20 (GG *et al.*), and a pair was discovered at L. à L'Anguille, *Rimouski*, July 29 (R. Saint-Laurent). A Tricolored Heron lingering from spring was still at Barachois, *Gaspé*, June 1, but moved to

