

Atlantic Provinces Region

BLAKE MAYBANK

Spring 1996 will be remembered (at least by me) for the fallout of May 11–12 (see below), for a good arrival of southern herons, and for relatively cool, wet weather. Was the weather atypical? As the son of a cloud physicist, I know better than to claim “unusual” weather, or blame perceived changes on global warming, volcanoes, El Niño, or the pathetic performance of the Toronto Blue Jays. However, gardeners were generally unhappy (late frosts), and many birds that misjudged the weather May 11–12 paid the price.

Birders in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are increasingly linked through the Internet, and a discussion group has begun in New Brunswick—NatureNB—which I found very useful for collecting information and drawing inferences about birds. It is hoped a Nova Scotia discussion group will start soon. This has certainly made my job as regional editor easier, and helps provide a more accurate and timely picture of avian adventures. Most of Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, however, at least in terms of aerial coverage, remains a big unknown. Link up and log on.

Reporting was good for New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Saint Pierre et Miquelon, poor from the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, skimpy from Prince Edward Island, and almost nonexistent elsewhere.

Abbreviations: GM (*Grand Manan archipelago, New Brunswick*); MSI (*Machias Seal Island, New Brunswick*); SPM (*Saint Pierre et Miquelon*); BPI (*Bon Portage Island, Nova Scotia*); BI (*Brier Island, Nova Scotia*); CSI (*Cape Sable Island, Nova Scotia*); SI (*Sable Island, Nova Scotia*).

Loons to Herons

A notable passage of Red-throated Loons is described in the first S.A. below. A Pacific Loon, providing about Nova Scotia's 12th sight record, was described from Broad Cove May 29 (SF *et al.*). It was the best spring heron flight in years, at least in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. As can be seen in the following table, Nova Scotia fared especially well. Specific records of note are described afterwards.

Spring Heron Flight

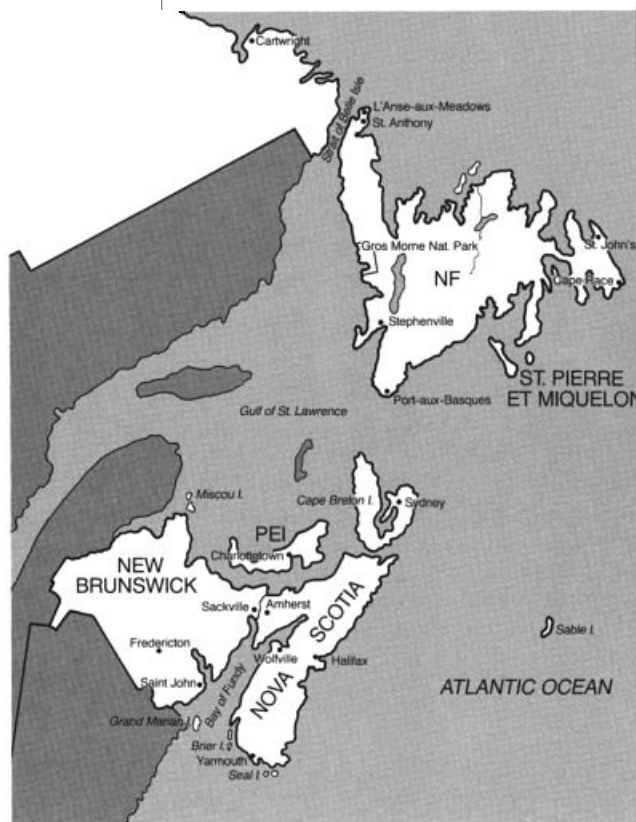
	NS	NB	NF	SP
Great Egret	12	6	2	1
Little Blue Heron	6	6		
Snowy Egret	10	8		
Tricolored Heron	6	3		
Cattle Egret	2	1		
Green Heron	5	*		
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	2			
Glossy Ibis	8	5		

* breeds regularly in s. New Brunswick in small numbers.

A Least Bittern, the first for Nova Scotia in several years, paraded around inaccessible SI April 29–30 (ZL). More obligingly, a Least Bittern called reliably in the evening from Daley Cr. Marsh, NB, during the last week of May; it remained visually elusive. The Region's 8th Little Egret was on Newfoundland's Bonavista peninsula April 21–25 (J. Joy *et al.*); it provided the 3rd provincial occurrence. A Little Egret in Louisbourg, NS, from May 8 was assumed to be the same individual discovered there a year ago (DM); this time it seemed to be keeping company with a Snowy Egret. Hybrids, anyone? Cape Sable Island hosted three notable early herons: A Great Egret Mar. 22–23 provided the 2nd-earliest provincial arrival date (JN *et al.*); a Little Blue Heron Mar. 21 (JN) represented the earliest (and first March) arrival date; and a Black-crowned Night-Heron March 21 (JN) provided the earliest arrival date, and the 2nd March record overall. The first multiple sightings of Tricolored Heron for Nova Scotia were two at Matthew's L., May 9 (DY), and two at Conrad's Beach May 31 (*vide* FL); New Brunswick was not to be out done, with two at Redhead Marsh May 24 (*vide* JE). A freshly-dead ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron Mar. 31 at The Pubnicos was record early, and paid the price. Glossy Ibis have been scarce in Nova Scotia in recent years; of this year's eight reports, a flock of four at Conrad's Beach April 22 was noteworthy (FL).

Waterfowl

SA This spring there was careful monitoring of seabird passage along the w. side of the Bay of Fundy. Two sites were particularly illuminating; the new Pt. Lepreau Bird Observatory (with commendable methodical coverage), and the more northerly Cape Enrage/Waterside (several enlightening counts). North-bound birds willing to fly up the Bay of Fundy and across the Isthmus of Chignecto connecting New Brunswick with Nova Scotia can shorten their journey considerably. Eider appear willing to undertake such a flight in daylight, while scoters and Red-throated Loons cross the land after dark. The chart below reveals why daily monitoring is important—if April 17 & 18 had been missed, an entirely different picture of the seabird migration would have emerged. The April 17 count of Red-throated Loons may represent a Regional high. Large scoter counts, however, are known. On May 1, 1973, Christie estimated 150,000 scoters at the mouth of the Restigouche R. at Dalhousie, NB; virtually all that could be identified were Black and Surf scoter. This year thousands of Black Scoters were present in the latter half of April. It



seems apparent that the great majority of Black Scoters that winter on the Atlantic coast use the Bay of Fundy to Restigouche route for their spring migration to Hudson Bay.

Given this migration, it would seem little would be left for Nova Scotia, so how to account for a concentration of 17,000 scoters in Green Bay April 17, estimated at 70% Surf, and the rest White-winged? Tentative conclusions from this year's observations: The 3rd week of April is the peak of Red-throated Loon and scoter migration, with the loons and Black Scoter moving up the w. side of the Bay of Fundy, White-winged Scoter selecting the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia, and Surf Scoter and Com. Eider split between the routes. And where do they go from here? All scoters are rare in Newfoundland and SPM, especially Black Scoter. Only 20 White-winged Scoter were seen in SPM this spring, all in the 3rd week of April.

An ad. swan on SI May 20–23 (ZL) awaits conclusive identification from photos. The yellow spot was absent, and vocalizations were indeterminate; the jury is leaning towards Tundra, rather than the less likely Trumpeter. Another unidentified swan flew over Rexton, NB April 16 (H. Thompson). Regional breeding waterfowl elicited little comment, except for the hardy N. Pintail population on remote SI that fledged 23 young from 5 pair (ZL).

"European" waterfowl, many wintering birds lingering into spring, were distributed as follows. Green-winged "Com." Teal (all males): Newfoundland four, Nova Scotia one, New Brunswick three. Eurasian

Wigeon: Newfoundland six (two females paired with a ♂ Am. Wigeon), Nova Scotia two males, New Brunswick four. Tufted Duck: a male and female in Nova Scotia, and two in New Brunswick, the St. John male until April 9 and a previously unknown female at Riverview Mar. 23–24 (*vide* DSC).

Raptors to Shorebirds

Turkey Vultures appeared with a vengeance in New Brunswick this spring, where they are normally rare. The number of birds involved is difficult to estimate, due to numerous repeat sightings and the wandering nature of the birds, but well over 20 birds were likely involved. Significant sightings included eight at Quispamsis April 20 (E&R Bosence), six at Cape Enrage the same day (C. Colpitts, R. Steeves), and three at Greenwich April 26 & 27 (*vide* JW). A similarly timed—albeit smaller—movement was noted in Nova Scotia away from the Turkey Vulture "stronghold" of BI, with three birds at Advocate Harbour April 29 (M. & J. Mills), one in distant Donkin, CBI, April 29 (DM, JM), and the last in Linden May 10 (JT). The only Regional Red-shouldered Hawk was at Saint-Joseph-de-Madawaska, NB April 28 (D. & M. Plourde).

New Horton Ridge, NB, is the only known site in the Region where a significant spring raptor passage occurs. Intermittent observations made there this spring were mostly unremarkable, but two Golden Eagles were noted: an adult March 12 and a sub-adult March 17. In Nova Scotia, 3 sightings of sub-ad. Golden Eagles e. of Halifax during the last week of March may represent the same bird. Elsewhere in the province, a near-

adult was sighted in *Yarmouth* in early March, and an adult was seen at Peggy's Cove Mar. 10 (C. Majka). Breeding has yet to be confirmed in the Region.

A dark-morph Gyrfalcon at St. Paul's Inlet May 19 (BMT) was record-late by 2 weeks for the island of Newfoundland. Mactavish describes a "poor" March and April for Gyrfalcon in Newfoundland; a single bird in most other places would constitute a "good" spring. It was therefore a good spring in New Brunswick, where a white-morph Gyr appeared on GM April 15 (L. Murison).

Willow Ptarmigan were apparently extirpated from SPM through over-hunting, so 57 birds from n. Labrador were introduced in mid-April. Some immediately began migrating north. Unless overzealous hunting is controlled, the reintroduction will not work. And speaking of introductions, Sharp-tailed Grouse in PEI seem to be hanging on. Three were sighted May 25 at Cape Head East (D. McAskill, R. Cooke). Early Soras in the Region are usually found near or past death, so single lively birds at Pubnico Head Mar. 29 (R. d'Entremont) and Lawrence-town L., Mar. 31–April 7 (IM *et al.*) represent the province's earliest conscious arrivals.

Spring shorebirds were typically scarce, with the largest number and variety at the traditional locations of CSI, Long I., and GM, with flock sizes rarely >100 birds. Spring shorebird rarities continue to delight, however. An Am. Golden-Plover April 27–29 at Pt. Amour, Labrador, possibly represented the first spring record for Newfoundland (JW, J. Seln); interestingly it was in basic plumage, whereas Greater Golden-Plover spring arrivals are always in full breeding plumage. Nova Scotia's 5th Black-necked Stilt was a brownish-backed female on SI April 17–18 (ZL), beyond the reach of keen provincial birders. Rare Regionally in spring, a Solitary Sandpiper reached SPM April 21 (L. Jackman), and another was on Seal I., NS, in late May (CB). Upland Sandpipers included one on CSI April 27–28 (earliest arrival date by 8 days), two at MSI May 1 (KA), and one at Lower West Pubnico, NS May 21 (*vide* TD). A "flock" of five White-rumped Sandpipers at Caribou I., NS May 25 (KM) provided a notable spring concentration.

Gulls to Alcids

All skua sightings came from the SI area. Lucas gave an excellent description of a Great Skua May 13, after being able to approach within 5 ft as it loafed on the beach. On fishing surveys n.e. of SI, Fiske reported three South Polar Skuas May 18 and one May 31, without details.

Large resident gulls continue their population decline to more "normal" levels, thanks

Pt. Lapreau Bird Observatory (data *vide* I. McCurdy)

DATE	RTLO	COEI	OLDS	BLSC	SUSC	WWSC
04/11		691	184		629	145
04/12		1220		1155		
04/13	554			820	169	
04/14		928		3354	320	
04/17	2893	480		727	967	73
04/18	55	4983	16567	4030		338
04/19		112		726	176	
04/20	8		286	1365	2896	45
04/21				930	170	5
04/22		615		2074		
04/24	88		305	2035	1330	94
04/25	12	488		1776	1161	47
04/28				1635	1366	
05/02	143			1055	1787	
05/04	23	72		189	81	15

Cape Enrage/Waterside (Rob Walker, ST, DSC)

to the moribund fishery and a more responsible approach to landfills. Nesting terns and eiders are benefitting, with the former recolonizing abandoned islands, and the latter suffering much smaller loss of ducklings. And perhaps birders can benefit; with fewer gulls to look through, unusual species might be easier to spot.

This spring's Regional vagrant crop was fair. Three ad. Laughing Gulls were on MSI, hopefully prospecting from their nearby colony at Petit Manan I., 35 mi to the southwest. Another adult was a fly-by from the GM ferry May 20 (*vide* JE). A 2nd-year Laughing Gull reached St. John's, NF April 27 (A. Gray), while an adult was on Seal I., NS in late May (CB). A 2nd-summer **Franklin's Gull** was on SI May 26 (ZL), providing about the province's 10th record. A 2nd-summer Little Gull seen May 20 at West Chezzetcook, NS (FL *et al.*) represented the first county record, while an adult was reported from Cape Breton in March without particulars. An ad. Mew "Common" Gull was at New Glasgow, NS April 7 (KM, CB, ph.), and a 2nd-summer bird was reported without details from Glace Bay, Cape Breton, for several days in late March; neither location is a regular Regional Common Gull site.

Lesser Black-backed Gull reports included three in St. John's, NF in April (*vide* BMT), and a returning adult in the Barrington, NS landfill in March (BMy, IM, ph.). New Brunswick also had Lessers: an adult at McGowan's Corner May 8 (JW), and the regular bird in Moncton through mid-May (*vide* DSC). Mactavish *et al.* reported 12 ad. Lesser Black-backed Gulls flying N past Pt. Amour, Labrador, between April 19–25, including seven April 19. He speculates that these birds are *en route* to Iceland, but I propose another theory: Both times I have visited the nearby mouth of the Pinware R. in late June–early July I have seen a few ad. Lesser Black-backed Gulls (and an ad. Mew "Common" Gull). In early July 1995, 2 independent observers each reported ad. Lessers, with counts as high as 11. I believe the birds breed somewhere along the nearby coast of Labrador.

Nova Scotia had a rare spring Caspian Tern at East R. Beach May 11 (C. Field). New Brunswick enjoyed a better show, with three at the Sackville Waterfowl Park May 2 (J. Tanner *et al.*), two at Pt. Lepreau the same day (*vide* JE), and four at Waterside May 12 (DSC *et al.*).

Doves to Flycatchers

Last winter's extensive incursion of Great Gray Owls barely reached this Region, with but one winter sighting in New Brunswick. A 2nd bird was discovered near Chatham, NB Mar. 9, lingering elusively for a week. Short-

eared Owls fluctuate widely in numbers in the Region, and they are rare breeders in Nova Scotia. The 3rd and 4th nests for the province were discovered on CSI in May (MN, S. Atwood), with three young fledging, and West Pubnico (*vide* TD), with 7 eggs April 29 and four newly hatched young May 19. Most of the 9 other reports provincewide were in *Antigonish*, where nesting was suspected. Four birds were noted on PEI, but no comment was made regarding nesting. Northern Saw-whet Owls are widespread and common in Nova Scotia, but the barrier of the Cabot Strait keeps many from reaching Newfoundland; the first in the province in 5 years was at Outer Cove in the last week of April (K. Knowles *et al.*). A Boreal Owl nest with 5 eggs (in a nest box) in e. Newfoundland was abandoned for unknown reasons (*vide* BMT).

Regarding the **Chuck-wills-widows** reported from SI the past 2 springs, McLaren has this update: "Alas, we must remove our late spring 1994 and 1995 records on Sable I. These birds were heard, but seen only as impressions in the dark (ZL). Leach's Storm-Petrels, previously unknown as nesters on the island, but evidently at least 'honeymooning' this spring, were established (ZL) as the source of the 'songs'—indeed somewhat like those of this southern goatsucker." It is perhaps only on SI that anyone would have to be wary of such a vocal confusion.

There were scattered reports of Red-bellied Woodpeckers from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, vestiges of last fall's invasion, and evidence of some successful overwintering. Unfortunately, no nests were reported.

Nova Scotia's 5th **Acadian Flycatcher** was on BI May 25 (RF, IM) and, unlike earlier sight records, this bird was well photographed. Regrettably, it neglected to sing. All five birds have occurred on islands. Three of the previous 4 records were in May, two on SI and the other on BI. The other record was an October bird on SI.

Swallows to Waxwings

Those concerned with suspected Regional declines in swallow numbers might be heartened with the news of 10,000 Tree Swallows at the New Minas sewage lagoon May 10 (J. Tufts). Notwithstanding, Etcheberry reports that Tree and Barn swallows continue to be scarce at SPM. A **Eurasian Jackdaw** at Cape Spear, NF April 14 may have been the same bird seen twice in St. John's in early January (BMT). White-breasted Nuthatches are usually thought of as resident, yet a small but detectable migration occurred in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the last half of April, a movement picked up, as usual, on islands: BI, CSI, and GM. A few Brown Creepers were mixed in for good measure.

New Brunswick hosted the only Blue-gray Gnatcatchers this spring, at St. Martin's May 13 (T. Sears), Summerville May 19 (H. Deichmann), and Fundy N.P., May 27 (ST, RW). The province also reported the only N. Wheatear, at Atholville (w. of Campbellton) May 18 (*vide* I. Doyle). Last autumn's flight of **Townsend's Solitaires** continued into spring. In New Brunswick the Hammond R. bird was seen into April, while in Nova Scotia previously undiscovered (or wandering) birds were seen at Blanche Mar. 15 (MN) and Conrad's Beach April 20.

A thrush with gray cheeks on Seal I., May 14 was carefully studied and pronounced a Gray-cheeked, not a Bicknell's—and also not the Gray-cheeked race from Newfoundland, which looks like a slightly larger Bicknell's (IM, RF). There are previous late-May records of that race of Gray-cheeked Thrush, which breeds far to the north and west of Nova Scotia. This is a confusing group of birds—was the American Ornithologist's Union too hasty? A Hermit Thrush in St. John's, NF March 29, was "either five weeks early or six months late" (BMT).

The Fallout of 1996

This Region is not the upper coast of Texas, and spring migrant fallouts are not expected here. But occasionally conditions occur that cause mayhem and mortality in passerine migration, and excitement among birders. Southerly and SW winds prevailed in May and, evidently, on the evening of May 10 a strong movement of birds occurred to the south and west of the Region. The birds were caught up in the clouds and rain of a slow-moving frontal system and could not see to land at dawn, and so continued flying. At noon May 11, the winds over s. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick shifted to the NE, forcing birds down through the clouds to "ground" level, which, unfortunately for many birds, was over the Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy. There was thick fog and heavy rain as well. Observers on BI, BPI, MSI, and GM, participating in the North American Migration Count, noticed the first trickle of birds in the early afternoon, and many fishermen reported exhausted birds landing on their boats. By evening, many birds of numerous species had arrived. For example, at 2 p.m., when the first sodden birds arrived, we had tallied only a single warbler for the migration count, a singing Yellow-rumped, but by dusk we had 15 species of warblers, plus many other new species for the day. By the next morning the true scope of the fallout was evident. Many birds were species that normally breed in the Region, but the presence of rarities and the abnormal number of certain species suggests most of these birds were not intending a visit to the Maritime Provinces.

Larger birds naturally fared better than smaller ones, and one can only guess at the

1000s of vireos and warblers that must have drowned in the sea. Even landfall didn't save some of them, witness the four Ovenbirds found dead of hypothermia on MSI. Birds willing to patronize feeders were less likely to succumb upon arrival, and were more easily counted, biasing the calculation of relative abundance. Many of the birds lingered for a few days on the islands, but there was a steady dispersal within the following 2 weeks, allowing mainland observers to pick up some good sightings—not surprisingly usually at feeders.

The occurrence of the following species seemed linked to the fallout:

Wood Thrush: two on SI May 14–16 (ZL), four on Seal I., NS May 13–14 (IM, RF), and one banded on BPI May 19 (JC).

Brown Thrasher: four on BI May 19–23 (v.o.), and singles at Economy, NS, and Mooseland, NS, at about the same time. An increase in sightings was noted in New Brunswick, where small numbers breed.

Warbling Vireo: one on BI May 11–12, and four on Seal I., NS May 14.

Blue-winged Warbler: a male on BI May 11 (BMy *et al.*), and two males on BPI the same date (one banded, *fide* JC).

Golden-winged Warbler: three males in Nova Scotia, where there are only about 15 records, including Seal I., May 14 (IM, R&AF), BPI May 18 (JC *et al.*), and Kentville May 25 (A. McLean *et al.*). There are even fewer records for New Brunswick, so there was considerable excitement over a singing male at GM May 20–21 (R-A. Mallet *et al.*), followed by another male at a different GM locale May 30 (ST).

Nashville Warbler: Ten on BI May 11 (BMy *et al.*) represented a good count.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: An individual in Moncton May 25 (D. Doucet, DSC), with a black back and extensive white wing-patch, was thought to be of the *cairnsii* Appalachian subspecies. If accurately identified—and if this form is a valid subspecies—this may represent the first Regional record for this form.

Prairie Warbler: This common autumn reverse fall migrant is very rare in spring; of >400 Nova Scotia records, only one is a spring bird. The pattern is mirrored in New Brunswick, where a single bird was on GM May 19–20

Prothonotary Warbler: a male on Seal I., NS May 14 (A. Foxall *et al.*).

Louisiana Waterthrush: One on BI May 12 (BMy); there are about 15 provincial records. This was matched by another in New Brunswick May 22 at Black's Harbour (DSC).

Connecticut Warbler: an ad. male banded on BPI May 12 (JC *et al.*). This provided only the 5th spring record in the province, with the other 20 or so seen in autumn. Almost all were on islands.

Scarlet Tanager: This species breeds in small numbers in both provinces, but they were unusually numerous after the fall-out, with a dozen birds in Nova Scotia (including 3 on BI May 12), and 15 or more across s. New Brunswick; most were adult males.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Incredible numbers were noted in Nova Scotia May 12, with 110 on BI (BMy *et al.*), mostly at feeders in the village of Westport (reduced to 30 birds by May 24), and another 20 in the village of Freeport across the channel from BI on Long I. "Many" were on BPI at the same time. Later on the mainland, "flocks" were noted at Advocate Harbour May 21, and at the inland location of Maitland. Two birds reached SPM in mid- to late May.

Blue Grosbeak: This is normally a late-April bird in the Region, so four at BI May 20 were likely part of the fall-out.

Indigo Bunting: Post fall-out birds spread across the s. part of the Region, gracing feeders, with a dozen birds each in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and three in PEI. Three–four individuals reached SPM, where the species has previously been recorded in only 7 of the past 23 springs.

Dickcissel: Very rare in spring, but one was on Seal I., NS from May 18 (CB).

Eastern Towhee: There were four fall-out birds in Nova Scotia, including two on Seal I., May 14 (IM, R&AF), and two in New Brunswick—one on MSI May 19 (KA) and another in Salisbury May 24.

Field Sparrow: two on BI May 20–24.

White-throated Sparrow: Many individuals of this abundant, widespread breeder had already arrived by May 11, but a concentration of 50 birds at feeders in Westport, BI, were certainly associated with the fallout, as only two had been noted in the morning May 11.

White-crowned Sparrow: This was one of the 2 stars of the fall-out. Here is a quote from my 1995 Maritimes Region report: "Another fine spring for White-crowned Sparrows. New Brunswick reported nine birds, PEI had two, SPM had one, while another 18 graced Nova Scotia." I considered it an exceptional spring. I must now reassess "exceptional." On the morning of May 12 on BI, Joan Waldron, Carl Haycock, and I counted a minimum of 530 birds at Westport feeders, with another 120 noted during a brief check of nearby Freeport. One Westport feeder saw 70 parading on the ground at one time. Most feeders were briefly checked for w. sub-species, but none was seen. Many of the birds were singing, providing an ethereal air to the day's excitement. Good numbers were also noted from BPI and Seal I., but there were no feeders there to concentrate the birds. Fewer birds reached New Brunswick *en masse*, but dozens were seen on

GM, and 25 were on MSI. Across s.e. New Brunswick, one–two birds were reported from many (perhaps most) feeders. Only four were reported from PEI. White-crowned Sparrows are normally "numerous" only in autumn in the Region (although they are regular in spring in small numbers in w. New Brunswick), but even then the record count is 400, from Seal I., Oct. 23, 1980. Observers on BI watched the declining numbers of White-crowned Sparrows daily, reporting the last lingering bird May 26.

Brewer's Blackbird: A male on BI May 12 was carefully studied (BMy *et al.*). There are about 20 records province-wide.

Orchard Oriole: A small number was mixed in with the Baltimore Oriole flight, with six in s. New Brunswick (four on GM, and two at coastal locations) and six in Nova Scotia, including four on BI.

Baltimore Oriole: The other star of the fall-out. They peaked May 12, a half-day after the start of the fall-out. "Dozens" were reported from BPI and CSI, but the big numbers were on BI, where 130 of all ages and sexes (BMy *et al.*) scrambled for hastily put out fruit, and on GM with a conservative 250 (*fide* BD). The orioles also benefitted from hummingbird feeders, already in place in anticipation of the mid-May arrival of Ruby-throateds. The oriole numbers tapered off in the ensuing 2 weeks, and many spread out across New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, delighting feeder-watchers in many locations.

Bullock's Oriole: David Young convincingly described an ad. female on BI May 23, also seen by several others. There are about 10 records for the province. They may be looked for more carefully now that it is a "real" species again.

It is perhaps instructive to note that given the weather forecast for May 11–12 (which was accurate), I would not have gone to BI were it not for the North American migration count, and thus would have missed an amazing spectacle.

Vireos to Finches

Two Orange-crowned Warblers successfully overwintered in Nova Scotia. Exceptionally early and numerous were 20 Yellow Warblers moving through Westport, BI April 26 (CH). Conversely, Etcheberry bemoaned the almost complete absence of the species on SPM, with only a single bird May 30. McLaren thought the species abundant in e. Nova Scotia. A group of three Pine Warblers—two males and a female—overwintered in Dartmouth, NS, and showed an interest in breeding. An Ovenbird was unusually early on MSI April 21. Pre-fallout, a remarkable 10 Summer Tanagers were seen in April at various Nova Scotia locales, two–three are average for spring. A Scarlet

Tanager was far afield in Prime Brook, Cape Breton, April 28 (*vide* DM); it lingered well into May. The Region is holding out high hopes for a serious colonization by N. Cardinals. After last autumn's record invasion, this spring produced numerous reports as males began singing. Over 50 birds were scattered across Nova Scotia, similar numbers in New Brunswick, and \geq six in PEI. Many pairings were noted, along with some successful nests. Feeders, of course, have been key to the birds' survival.

Also pre-fallout, the s. part of the Region enjoyed a modest arrival of the late April-early May "blues," as follows:

Blue Grosbeaks: PEI two; New Brunswick five; Nova Scotia ten.

Indigo Bunting: PEI two; New Brunswick six; Nova Scotia 30.

An ad. Lark Sparrow, representing only the 2nd spring New Brunswick record, was at Mary's Pt., May 27 (DSC *et al.*). An imm. Baltimore Oriole successfully overwintered on SPM, a first for the islands.

White-winged and Red crossbill numbers remain "massive" in Newfoundland, especially the former. More nests are being built as the most recent juveniles are fledged. When the cone crop gives out, expect a large out-movement from the province. The finch report was rather unremarkable, but one trend caught attention: Red Crossbills across New Brunswick and Nova Scotia began patronizing feeders, causing confusion among inexperienced feeder-watchers. It is just speculation that this occurred as young were being fledged, and as the cone crop started giving out. The birds were cooperative, but few observers attempted racial identifications; birds at a feeder in West Chetzetcook, NS, were thought to be of the maritime race, as expected.

Contributors (subregional editors in bold-face): Krista Amey, **Dave S. Christie** (DSC), Dave Curry, Joan Czupalay, **Brian Dalzell**, Ted d'Eon, Hank Deichmann, **Jim Edsall**, Roger Etcheberry, Roger & Andrew Foxall, Sylvia Fullerton, Keith Keddy, Zoe Lucas, **Bruce Mactavish** (BMT), Dave McCorquodale, John McKay, Ken McKenna, Ian McLaren, Murray Newell, Johnny Nickerson, Bev Sarty, **Francis Spalding**, **Richard Stern**, Jim Taylor, Stuart Tingley, Rob Walker, Jim Wilson, John Wells.

—Blake Maybank (BMy), 144 Bayview Drive, White's Lake, NS, Canada, B3T 1Z1 (e-mail Blake_Maybank@pch.gc.ca).

Quebec Region

Y. AUBRY AND P. BANNON

March was cool and dry in southern Québec, with little snow left on the ground. Eastern Québec, on the other hand, was hard hit by a couple of major snowstorms. April and May continued to be cool, but were much more wet. The last snowfall in southern Québec occurred on May 12, with *Charlevoix* receiving as much as a foot of the white stuff. It is no surprise that neotropical migrants remained very scarce prior to May 18. Unlike last spring, the main watercourses in southern Québec were very high, creating attractive habitats for waterfowl and shorebirds in certain localities. Following a poor spring for shorebirds and southern herons last year, observers benefited from an excellent flight, especially in the Upper Richelieu valley, where 22 species of shorebirds were reported.

Loons to Waterfowl

The peak of 1477 Red-throated Loons at Rivière-Ouelle, *Kamouraska*, May 9 was earlier than last year (CA). The Com. Loon previously reported at Laval throughout the winter was still present Mar. 25 (*vide* JPP). The province's unusual influx of

Horned Grebes included 100 at Chambly April 18 (MA), 58 at Boucherville the same day (*vide* JPP), 54 at Res. Choinières, Granby, April 29 (L. Grenier, DB), 63 at I. Charron, Longueuil, May 1 (*vide* JPP), and 41 at Chambly May 3 (*vide* JPP). Insufficient details accompanying the report of a Wilson's Storm-Petrel at Portneuf on the very early date of May 2 did not exclude other species of petrel (P. Caron). Out-of-range Great Cormorants included singles at I. aux Basques, Rivière-du-Loup, May 19 (JG Picard *et al.*) and I. aux Fermiers, Verchères, May 24 (RB *et al.*)

Worthy of mention were single Snowy Egrets at Bic, *Rimouski*, May 4–10 (M. Thériault *et al.*), Barachois, *Gaspé*, May 18 (F. Grenier, L. Allain, *vide* PP), and Cacouna, *Rivière-du-Loup*, May 23–26 (C. Bouchard *et al.*). A Tricolored Heron was a highlight at Plaisance, *Papineau*, April 21 (J. Soucie, M.C. Cronier, G. Rompré). After remaining undetected last spring, Cattle Egrets numbered \geq six this year. A Green Heron strayed to Chandler, *Gaspé*, May 26, well e. of its normal range (PP, D. Mercier). An ad. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was a prize find for a few birders at I. aux Fermiers May 22–26 (J. Lefebvre, S. Pruneau, RB), providing a 9th Regional record. The number of Glossy Ibises in spring has fluctuated from one–twenty in the last 10 years, but this spring's total of six birds was right on the average.

The season's total of ten Tundra Swans included a group of six at Deschênes, *Pontiac*, March 25 (J. Dubois), two at Saint-Anicet, *Huntingdon*, April 23 (*vide* G. Huot), and singles at Saint-Barthélemy,

