

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 Chzzetcook, NS, were thought to be of the maritime race, as expected.

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# 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.

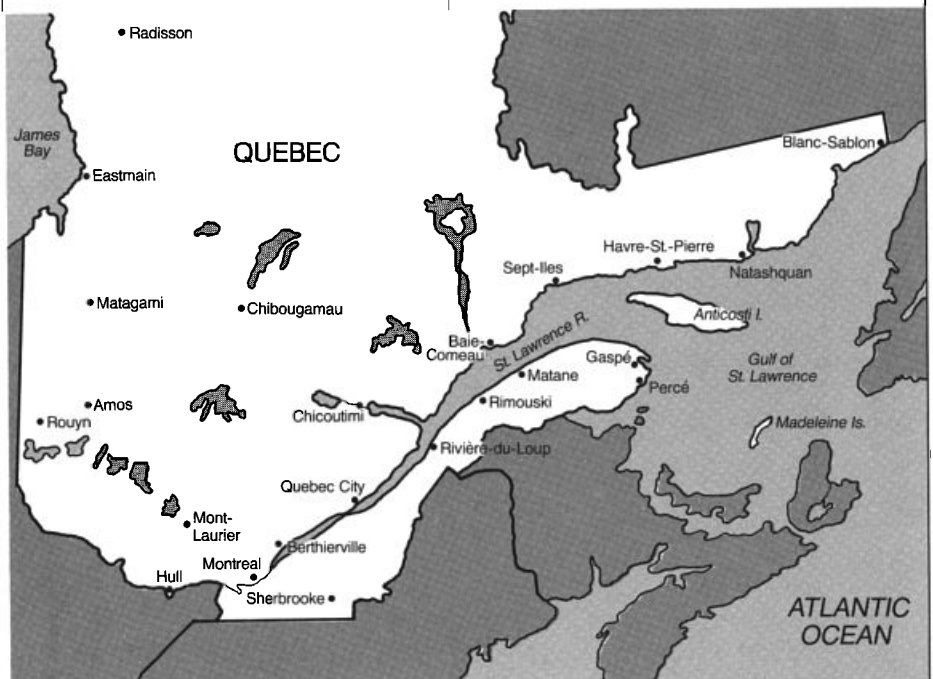
## Loons to Waterfowl

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,



*Maskinongé*, May 18–25 (MB, MeB), and Saint-Fulgence, *Chicoutimi*, May 30–31 (CC, GS *et al.*). Two Mute Swans paused at Saint-Barthélemy April 20 (*vide* JPP). The total of ten Greater White-fronted Geese encountered across the Region was about average; among these, singles were reported at Mont-Brun, *Abitibi*, (SG) and Rivière-Héva, *Abitibi* (L&N Ouimet), May 6. An unprecedentedly high count of 300,000 Snow Geese was made at Baie-du-Febvre, *Nicolet*, during the 3rd week of April (DJ). The species was also encountered e. of its course: 800 were at Cap-Chat, *Matane*, April 25 (PG) and one at Fatima May 25–29 provided Magdalen I. with its first spring record (B. Vigneault, DGG). Eight Ross' Geese were reported, including a blue morph, now almost annual, at Baie-du-Febvre March 30–April 5 (RGU, C. Auclair, L. Côté). A count of 1200 Brant at Île des Soeurs, *Montréal*, May 21 was impressive (RTh), while 200 in flight over Mississiquoi Bay June 15 were late (MA, C. Chalk). Becoming annual in the Region, single Barnacle Geese visited Baie-du-Febvre April 21 (MG, DB) and LaBaie, *Chicoutimi*, May 30 (J. St-Pierre). There were 4 reports of a small Canada Goose, presumably of the race *huchinsii*.

Single Green-winged Teals of the Eurasian form were discovered at Baie-du-Febvre (DD, FGy, MG, LH) and Saint-Joseph, *Beauce* (L. Légaré), both on April 20, while single birds at La Pocatière, *Kamouraska*, April 25, (CA) and Portneuf, April 29, (FD, RD) were apparently showing features of *crecca* and *carolinensis*, possibly indicating a hybrid. A total of 13 Eur. Wigeons was near average for the last 10 years. Québec's 8th and 9th **Tufted Ducks** were single males at Baie-du-Febvre April 25–29 (DJ, m.ob.) and Cacouna May 2 (C. Robin, JRP). Inland Com. Eiders included singles at Chambly March 28 (MA), Trois-Rivières April 13 (*vide* SD), and Saint-Fulgence May 27 (CC, GS). Observers were astounded when single ♀ King Eiders appeared at Saint-Timothée, *Valleyfield*, March 15–April 13 (BL, m.ob.) and Res. Beaudet, Victoriaville, April 22 (MG, JD, CR, A. Daigle). The 22,000 scoters, including 16,000 Black Scoters, at Baie-Comeau May 8 represented an exceptionally high number (GC).

### Vultures to Shorebirds

Turkey Vultures continued their increase across the province; single day counts included 27 and 25 at Beaupré, Québec City, April 21 & 23 respectively (ML, AC, G. Picard) and eight at La Pocatière April 21 (CA); easternmost birds included singles at Pointe aux Outardes, Baie-Comeau, April 27 (S. Leblanc, S. Paré), Baie-Comeau May

4 (GC), and Forillon Park, *Gaspé*, May 11 (S. Marchand), while the Saguenay-L. Saint-Jean region had 8 reports (*vide* GS). The spring hawk migration will certainly not pass into history; numbers were low except for Bald and Golden eagles. An apparent Swainson's Hawk was closely observed at Baie-du-Febvre April 2 (L. Fortin, J. Béliveau). Ten Gyrfalcons lingered into March and April in the Region.

The nesting range of the Sandhill Crane is gradually extending south and east. A nest was found near L. Saint-Cyr, about 100 km e.s.e. of Lebel-sur-Quévillon, *Abitibi*, May 14 (D. Bordage), and 6 reports originated from the Saguenay region, where breeding is suspected (*vide* GS). Other reports included singles at Saint-Léon-de-Stanton, *Bellechasse*, April 21 (GL) and I. aux Oies, *Montmagny*, May 29 (CM, FS), and ≤15 birds near Roquemaure, *Abitibi*, May 15 (Y. Leclerc).

Rare spring visitors to the Region were single Am. Golden-Plovers at La Pocatière May 16 (CA), and Saint-Fulgence (CC, GS) and Cacouna (DD *et al.*), both May 26. Single Willets turned up at La Pocatière May 9 (JF Rousseau), Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague, *Valleyfield*, May 25 (JMB *et al.*) and Fatima, Magdalen I., May 27 (DGG, ZD). A Whimbrel at Chandler May 5 (PP) was early, while one at Baie-du-Febvre May 25–26 was locally rare (LH, MG, JD). Sightings of Hudsonian Godwits included a pair at Saint-Méthode, *Roberval*, May 23 (LI) and singles at Saint-Fulgence May 28–31 (CC, GS *et al.*) and Rivière-Ouelle May 30 (CA). The 12 Marbled Godwits represented an exceptional total considering that two–three are usually the norm. Although not unprecedented, 100 Red Knots at I. Bourdon, *Repentigny*, May 24 were a spectacular sight (J. Brisson *et al.*). A record-early Semipalmated Sandpiper was discovered at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu May 4 (PB), but the bulk of the birds did not move through the Region until late spring, when 500 were noted at Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague May 29 (DD *et al.*). Twelve Purple Sandpipers at Étang du Nord May 26 provided the Magdalen I. with its first spring record (*vide* DGG). A Dunlin at Rivière-Ouelle April 8, was record early by 2 days (JFR, G. Perreault). Rarely reported in spring were single Stilt Sandpipers at Sainte-Anne-de-Sabrevois, *Upper Richelieu*, May 8 (PE, DD, L. D'Amour) and Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix, *Upper Richelieu*, May 24 (NT, L. Biron, L. Leblond, R. Boyer). Always exciting, Ruffs made a good showing with ≥five birds reported. An imm. female that arrived at La Pocatière on the unbelievably early date of March 25 was record early by 19 days (CA); the bird braved the cold and the snow

until April 13, when it disappeared. Other reports included a male at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix May 7–15 (RTh, LS, m.ob.), a female seen at Henryville (DD *et al.*) and at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix May 16 (PB), a female at Cacouna May 26–27 (DD *et al.*), and another female at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix, May 30 (PE, DD, PB). The 925 Short-billed Dowitchers provided a substantial high count for the Upper Richelieu valley, May 26 (PB). The nest of an Am Woodcock containing 2 eggs and three young May 19 provided the Magdalen I with its first confirmed breeding record (C. Roy, I. Daigneault). A ♂ Wilson's Phalarope ventured to Antoine R., *Abitibi*, May 17 (SG, L. Gagnon), while a Red Phalarope at Québec City May 9 was very early (GP).

### Gulls to Shrikes

Single Franklin's Gulls were at Portneuf (CM) and Old Harry, *Magdalen I.* (DGG, ZD), both May 21. The Region total of five Little Gulls included singles at Verdun, *Montréal*, April 29 (RGU), Port Saint-Francois, *Nicolet*, May 16 (MG), Métabetchouan, *L. Saint-Jean*, May 16 (CG, FGa), Québec City May 16 (FD, RD), and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu May 18 (PB). Late Iceland Gulls included 40 at Saint-Fulgence May 29 (CC, GS) and singles at Chambly May 24 (JMB) and I. Bourdon May 28 (PB). Reported only from the Saguenay-L. Saint-Jean region, single Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Chicoutimi April 23 (first-summer) (CC *et al.*), Métabetchouan May 16 (2nd-summer) (CG, FGa), and Métabetchouan May 20 (adult) (CC, GS). A record-early ad. Sabine's Gull at Québec City May 20 provided the Region with its 2nd spring record prior to June (RGI *et al.*). The total of eight Caspian Terns included three very early individuals two at Île des Soeurs April 23 (RTh, LS, NT) and one at Saint-Gabriel-de-Brandon, *Berthier*, April 27 (MB, MeB).

Following last winter scarcity of Snowy Owls, it was quite surprising to find 11 at I aux Grues, *Montmagny*, March 16 (P. Lane, J. Labrecque) and 10 at Saint-Barthélemy March 30 (*vide* JPP). Last winter's Great Gray Owl invasion carried on until late spring, with a ≥60 individuals reported for the season. Late birds included singles at Saint-Alexis-de-Montcalm, *Maskinongé*, May 25 (D. Ricard), Saint-Félix d'Otis, *Chicoutimi*, May 26 (R. Tremblay, C. Gilbert, N. Gilbert), and Île des Soeurs May 31 (*vide* PB). The total of 14 Boreal Owls reported was above the average. A N. Saw-whet Owl located at Mont-Brun May 27 (SG) was a local rarity.

A ♀ Red-bellied Woodpecker successfully overwintered at Saint-Jules, *Bonaventure* (D Caldwell, *vide* J.M. Pitre), as did a male

along Maskinongé R., Maskinongé, (P. Couillard, *vide* A. Gauthier), while singles were reported from Greenfield Park April 6 (C. Morin), Île des Soeurs April 20 (PB) and Katevale, *Orford*, May 31–June 1 (JD, J. Tanguay). Single pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers returned to their traditional nesting site at Breckenridge, *Outaouais* (J. Dubois), and Saint-Armand, *Missisquoi* (JGP). A N. Rough-winged Swallow ventured to Rimouski May 1–3 (JRP, S. Rhéaume *et al.*). Few Tufted Titmice seem to have survived the winter, but some birds successfully overwintered at Cap Saint-Ignace, *Montmagny* (J. Landry), Saint-Armand (JGP), and Saint-Timothée, *Beauharnois* (BL). Single birds were also found at Victoriaville April 19 (C. Roy), Saint-Lambert April 24 (S.J. Hills), Île des Soeurs April 25–28 (RB, DD), and Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville May 4 (F. Morneau, P. Wery), while four birds enlightened Otterburn Park May 14 (LH). A Brown Creeper strayed to Bassin, *Magdalen Is.*, March 3 (m.ob.), where it is rarely encountered. The Carolina Wren was recorded in above-average numbers in s. Québec, with two at Chambly April 21 (*vide* JPP) and singles at Beaconsfield March 11 (S. Bérubé), Baie d'Urfée April 16 (R. Poole), Saint-Lambert April 16–18 (G. Woodward), Carignan April 21 (RGU), and Boucherville I. May 23 (M. Beauchamp). Whether these represent survivors of last winter or an influx of new birds remains unknown. Single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers wandered to Duberger, *Québec*, May 23 (LM), Cap Tourmente May 22 (O. Couture *et al.*), and Chicoutimi May 22 (LI). A Townsend Solitaire showed up at Rock Forest, Eastern Townships, March 2–7 (*vide* C. Dufresne). A breeding-plumaged N. Wheatear enlightened Lavernière, *Magdalen Is.*, May 15–17 (J.Y. Gaudet). The lone Varied Thrush of the last season successfully overwintered at Saint-Bruno, *Montarville* (D. Bergeron). The now extremely-rare Loggerhead Shrike was reported from Plaisance, *Outaouais*, April 17–21 (DT, G. Desjardins), Bic P.P., *Rimouski*, May 11–17 (R. Pitre *et al.*), and Cap-Chat, *Matane*, April 10–12 (PG). These last 2 localities are north of its former breeding range.

### Warblers to Finches

For many areas it was by far the poorest warbler migration in many years, while in others it was uneven. The best spot was Île des Soeurs, with 27 species; the best period was May 18–22. A Magnolia Warbler at Saint-Armand April 27 (LH) was record early. A Yellow-throated Warbler (apparently *albilora* ssp), at Île des Soeurs May 20 (P. René, J. Sauriol, m.ob.), represented

the 11th record for the province, and only the 2nd in spring.

A ♂ Cerulean Warbler was observed at Lévis May 17 (GL), another one was at Île des Soeurs May 18 (PB), and four were sighted at Philipsburg May 17 (CR), where it is known to nest. A ♀ Prothonotary Warbler enlightened Île des Soeurs May 21 (DD, m.ob.), while a Louisiana Waterthrush appeared at the same site and at the same date (M. Bertrand). Other unusual warblers for s. Québec included a ♂ Hooded Warbler at Summit Park, *Montréal*, May 17–18 (G. Seutin) and a Connecticut Warbler at the Montréal Botanical Gardens May 26 (C. Tastayre). A N. Waterthrush was record early at Pointe-du-Gouvernement, *Richelieu*, April 26 (PB).

Many N. Cardinals overwintered and were still around early in the season in the Saguenay-L.-Saint-Jean and Lower St. Lawrence regions, while nests were found at Cap-Rouge April 7 (G. Bordeleau) and Beauport May 28 (R. Bélanger, P. Bergeron), so far representing the northernmost breeding localities in the province. Single Blue Grosbeaks wandered to Bic May 1–4 (C. Langlois, m.ob.), Gaspé April 20–21 (J. Gagnon, G. Durocher, ph.), and Newport, *Bonaventure*, April 28–29 (M. Castilloux, S. Cyr). Many Indigo Buntings reached n. localities of the N. Shore, Lower St. Lawrence, Gaspé, and Abitibi regions. A 2nd-year ♂ Dickcissel was reported from Chandler, *Bonaventure*, May 27 (JR). A Spotted Towhee was observed at Cap Tourmente May 23 (GP), providing the 9th Regional record, while single Eastern Towhees were noted at Sillery March 2 (LM, A. Gagnon) and Touraine, *Outaouais*, April 26 (G. Urwin), followed by two at Hull April 28 (Y. Lanthier, M. Forget). A Field Sparrow stopped at a Cap-aux-Os feeder, *Gaspé*, April 17 (A. Bourassa, F. Villeneuve), while the 9th Lark Bunting for the Region was present at a feeder in Longueuil May 5–6 (D. Auger, m.ob., ph.), providing the earliest provincial record. Along with recently colonized sites like Île aux Oies and La Pocatière, the Le Conte's Sparrow was also reported from Huntingdon May 25 (M&A Goyer). What seemed to have been a White-crowned Sparrow (ssp *gambelli*) was reported from Pont-Rouge, *Portneuf*, May 16, while two birds showing intermediate characteristics between *gambelli* and *leucophrys*, with white lores and pink bill, were carefully studied at Saint-Fulgence, *Saguenay*, May 26 (CC, GS). A "white-winged type" Dark-eyed Junco was reported from Notre-Dame de Portneuf April 30 (CM). A ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird was reported from Métis, *Matane*, May 22–23 (D. Marcogliese, *vide* B. Bernier). A ♀ Brewer's Blackbird was

observed at Québec City May 7 (A. Cayer), providing the 8th record for the Region.

Finches were generally in low numbers throughout s. Québec, except for Com. Redpolls, which lingered well into May in most regions. Single House Finches were reported from Jonquière April 20 (J. Ibarzabal, H. Claveau) and Chandler, *Bonaventure*, May 6–10 (J.R. Lepage). A Hoary Redpoll observed at Cap-aux-Meules, *Magdalen Is.*, March 3–April 7 (DGG, C.A. Gaudet) was considered a local rarity.

### Exotics

Two Chinese Geese were discovered at Laval May 28 (G. Lachaine, m.ob.). A Greylag Goose accompanying a flock of 50 Canada Geese at I. Bourdon May 28–30 was believed to be an escapee (PB, m.ob.). A pair of Smew at L. des Joncs, near Rimouski, May 5–6 was of unknown origin (J. Giroux *et al.*). A Ringed Turtle-Dove at Hull May 20 was probably the same individual observed in 1994 and 1995 (D&L Parenteau).

A ♀ Ring-necked Pheasant was recorded at Chicoutimi April 15–May 3 (C. Simard *et al.*), while a male at the same locality was reported May 28+ (CC, GS). A Budgerigar visited a feeder at Jonquière April 11–20 (A&R Cormier). A Eur. Goldfinch successfully overwintered at Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle, *Upper Richelieu*, and was still there March 9 (*vide* PB), while another was found at Huntingdon May 21 (J. Gras).

### Addenda

A Razorbill was killed at Bécancour, *Nicolet*, Sept. 25, 1995 (*vide* SD).

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