

Atlantic Provinces Region

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June was described as cool and wet in all the Region. July was close to average, being drier and warmer. Hurricane *Bertha* did not cause any avian fallouts, but washed out some Black-legged Kittiwake nests in the Bay of Fundy. No large cone crops, berry crops, or any associated influxes of birds were reported. The breeding season seemed normal, without any detectable major mishaps or events. Birders tend to let down their guard in summer, thinking there is very little excitement in the line of rarities to find. However, each summer impressive vagrants are turned up. This year's headliners were Spotted Redshank, White-winged Dove, three Painted Buntings, and a Chestnut-collared Longspur!

Abbreviations: GMI (*Grand Manan Island*); SPM (*St. Pierre et Miquelon*)

Loons to Herons

A Cory's Shearwater was off Port Dufferin, NS July 19, on the early side for this rare but regular late-summer visitor to the Region (*vide* BMy). Thirty Wilson's Storm-Petrels off Martin Head, NB June 28 were unusually far up the Bay of Fundy (TS). Least Bitterns were calling at 2 New Brunswick locations: Mary's Pt., May 27–June 1 (ST *et al.*) and near Riverside-Albert June 7 (ST *et al.*). Most intriguing was a Great Blue Heron-like heron with a "neck that was quite white except for narrow longitudinal lines" and "thighs whitish not showing any rufous color" seen on Miquelon, SPM July 15 (RE). The bird was wary, preventing more detailed study or photos of this possible Gray Heron candidate. Great Egret was the most numerous of the "southern herons" to stray N to the Region, with three in New Brunswick, two in Nova Scotia and one in Saint Pierre et Miquelon. Snowy Egret was a close 2nd, with three in New Brunswick and two in Nova Scotia. Single Little Blue Herons were in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Rare in spring, a Cattle Egret was at New Horton, NB June 8 (DC). Single Tricolored Herons were at Cocagne, NB in mid-June (DR) and at St. Anselme, NB July 25, while one at Gros Morne N.P., NF June 7 provided only a 3rd provincial record (MO).

Waterfowl to Raptors

A molting ♂ Wood Duck well n. of the known breeding range at Goose Bay, Lab., July 12 may have been the same individual present May 29 (BMT). Gadwall was widely reported in s. New Brunswick, with a high count of seven at Sackville (SB). A pair of Gadwall at Langlade, SPM, July 13 furnished just the 3rd record for the French islands (MD). The only report of Eur. Wigeon this summer was a drake at Eel R. Bar, NB, April 28–June 15 (m.ob.). A summering flock of 300 sub-ad. Black Scoters at Restigouche, NB, was joined by 100 post-breeding ♂

Greater Scaup in mid-June (ML). Despite the elimination of half the Great Black-backed Gull population at The Wolves archipelago, NB, this summer, only eight of 3000 Com. Eider ducklings survived to adulthood because of gull predation.

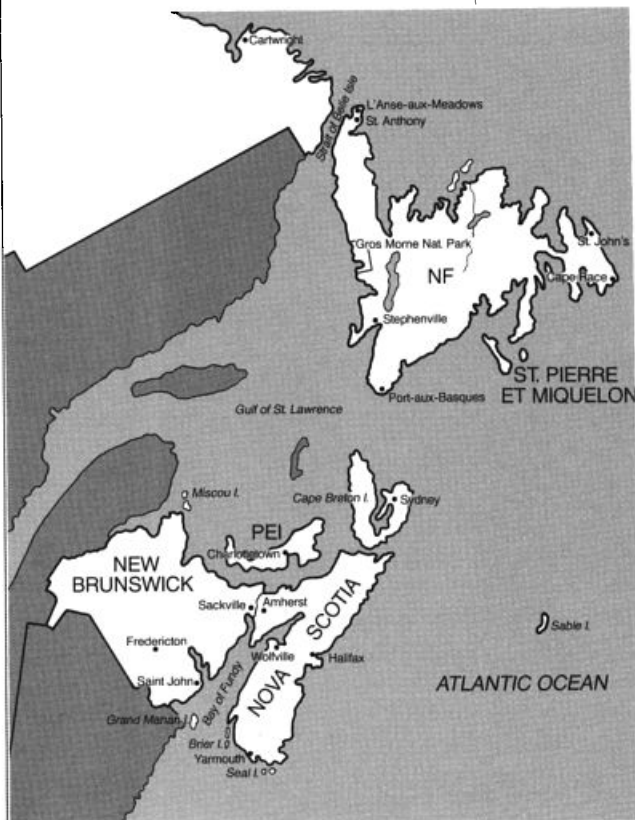
Turkey Vultures reports were more numerous than ever around the Saint John and Hampton, NB, areas, but breeding remains unconfirmed in the Region. One of the few breeding pairs of Cooper's Hawk known in the Region returned to the nest at Pokiok, NB (*vide* JE). Vocal pairs of Red-shouldered Hawks were present through June at Shediac River, NB (ST) and Dalhousie, NB (ML). A sub-adult Golden Eagle in Cape Breton Highlands N.P., NS in mid-July lends yet further credibility to the rumor that they breed there (KM).

Shorebirds

Even after an intensive program of protecting the Piping Plover breeding population in n.e. New Brunswick, an early June survey of 105 was down from last year's 123, though similar to 1992 and 1994 (*vide* R. Chiasson). There was a slight increase in the small population of Piping Plover breeding in Newfoundland. The recently established breeding group of Piping Plovers on St. Pierre et Miquelon remained at 3 pairs, though no young were fledged (RE). For the 4th consecutive year an American Oystercatcher visited the Grand Manan, NB, archipelago, this time June 1 on Machias Seal I. (KA). Nova Scotia's 5th Spotted Redshank was a breeding plumage bird at W. Chezzetcook July 19 (*vide* BMy). An American Avocet was a rarity at Saint John, NB, starting July 30 (AR). There were six Willets on Flat Bay I. in s.w. Newfoundland in early June, the only breeding site in the province (JP *et al.*). Out-of-range Willets were at Grand Barachois, SPM June 3–5 (LJ) and St. Paul's Inlet, NF July 12 (TB, KK). A large concentration of 200 Whimbrel was feeding in a hay field at Sherbrooke, PEI July 13 (LH). Nearly annual in the Region, a white-rumped Whimbrel of an Eurasian subspecies was at Isthmus, SPM June 12 (JA, RE). A ♂ Ruff was at the Grand L., NB, meadows June 10 & 18 (GF, PK).

Jaegers to Alcids

The several skua reports included a documented Great Skua 30 mi w. of Yarmouth, NS June 22 (TS); and single South Polar Skuas off Brier I., NS, late July (*vide* BMy) and Cape St. Francis, NF, late July (TB). Up to seven Laughing Gulls were on Machias Seal I., NB June 16 (*vide* BD).



They regularly prospect at this location but are driven off by nesting terns. Six Laughing Gulls at widely separated locations in Nova Scotia during July was above normal (*fide* BMy). An unseasonable ad. Little Gull was at Shediac, NB June 2 (JE). The recently established southernmost breeding colony of Black-legged Kittiwakes in North America, on The Wolves, Bay of Fundy, NB, lost half of the 138 nests due to the remnants of hurricane *Bertha* (*fide* BD). A good spawning run of caplin resulted in high reproductive success in the large kittiwake colonies in Newfoundland, after several poor seasons. There was a peak of five Roseate Terns on Machias Seal I., NB June 19, with no confirmation of nesting (*fide* BD). Razorbills appear to be establishing a 3rd colony in the outer Bay of Fundy, with 4 pairs prospecting South Wolf I., NB (*fide* BD). A Thick-billed Murre off GMI, NB June 20 was out of season (B. Mountain).

Doves to Shrikes

This summer's White-winged Dove was at Miquelon, SPM June 30 for the 2nd French islands record (DD). With the rapid increase and spread of breeding Mourning Doves through the Maritimes in the past 2 decades, it is inevitable that they will be found breeding in Newfoundland. A fledged juv. Mourning Dove at St. Barbe, NF July 24 was the closest evidence of breeding in the province to date (ST). Several Mourning Doves summered in Goose Bay, Lab. (*fide* BMT).

Exploration of remote sections of Cape Breton Highlands N.P., NS, resulted in the first provincial breeding record of N. Hawk Owl with the discovery of 2 nests with young and another pair (*fide* BMy). Hawk Owls were unusually numerous on the tip of the Northern Peninsula, NF, though the summer. A nest of Boreal Owl in Cape Breton Highlands N.P., NS was a rare find (*fide* BMy). Rare in Nova Scotia, single Three-toed Woodpeckers were at *Kings* July 24–26 and *Lunenburg* late July (*fide* BMy). A Com. Nighthawk was calling over Goose Bay, Lab., June 6, where perhaps a few pairs breed (BMT).

After last summer's discovery of 2 pairs of breeding Least Flycatchers in Goose Bay, Lab., further exploration this summer revealed that they are fairly common and well-established breeders in the 2nd-growth deciduous on the lower Churchill R. (BMT). Willow Flycatchers were well reported, with single singing males at Maugerville, NB June 9 (PP); St. Anselme, NB June 10 (ST); Elgin, NB June 21 (DC); Burns Road, PEI June 15 (RF); Sandy Pt., NS June 6–9; E Arling-

ton, NS June 8; and Wallace Bay Sanctuary, NS June 15 (*fide* BMy). An E. Phoebe was rare as far east as St. Pierre, SPM June 21 (MD). Eastern Kingbirds made n. appearances at both Goose Bay and Churchill Falls, Lab., June 10 (BMT, BL). Up to four N. Rough-winged Swallows were at Point Wolfe, Fundy N.P., NB June 2–7 (*fide* DC), and one was flying over Moncton, NB June 9 (BD). A wandering Purple Martin was at Miquelon, SPM June 6 (LJ). Only a ♀ House Wren returned to the site of last summer's breeding in Fredericton, NB (SS). A male was singing at Deep Cove, GMI, NB June 1 (ST). A Sedge Wren, formerly occurring locally in tiny numbers during the summer in New Brunswick, was singing at Deippe June 1–late July (m.ob.). A late spring Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at McLaren Pd., Fundy N.P., NB June 2 (ST, RW).

Radical N. Mockingbirds ended up at 3 far-flung parts of Labrador in June: one at Goose Bay June 8 & 9 (BMT), one at Northwest R. late June (JT), and as far east as it could get at a puffin colony in the Gannet Is. in early July (*fide* IJ). Teasing Bohemian Waxwings were present during the period w. of Nain, Lab., with 15 June 7, and 3 separate pairs July 22–24 (BMT). With the dramatic increase of Bohemian Waxwings over the last 10 winters, it is quite feasible that they will be or already are nesting in the Region. The first Nova Scotia Loggerhead Shrike in 10 years was at Brier I., June 15 (*fide* BMy).

Vireos to Finches

A rare spring sighting of Yellow-throated Vireo was at *Pictou*, NS June 3 (*fide* BMy). Three Philadelphia and >10 Red-eyed vireos singing in the Goose Bay, Lab., area in June were n. of the known breeding range (BMT, PT). Chestnut-sided Warblers n.e. of the breeding range included a female June 12 at Langlade, SPM (RE), and a singing male June 19 near St. John's, NF (DF); but far out-distancing these was a singing male June 7 at Goose Bay for a first Labrador record (BMT). More observations of Pine Warblers in s. New Brunswick suggests an increase in the breeding population. A Pine Warbler June 1 at Indian R., PEI, provided a rare summer record for the province (LH).

A first summer ♂ Scarlet Tanager sang June 6 & 7 from an aspen grove in Goose Bay for a first Labrador record (BMT). Following last fall's surge of N. Cardinals to New Brunswick, there were reports in many areas during the summer (*fide* DC). Three, presumably wild ♂ Painted Buntings showed up at New Brunswick

bird feeders in June: Salem June 2–5 (L Hayward *et al.*), St. Martins June 10–15 (Mrs. Hedderson *et al.*) and Haut-Lamèque June 30–July 4 (M. Aubut *et al.*). Stray Indigo Buntings included a female June 4 and a male June 5–11 at a feeder in Miquelon, SPM (JH). Single E Towhees were singing at Norbert, NB June 23 (ST) and Salisbury, NB June 22 & 23 (JE). A highly agitated ♂ Song Sparrow at Goose Bay, Lab., June 15 suggested nesting at this n. community (BMT). The rarity of the season was a drab ♀ Chestnut-collared Longspur at Castalia, GMI, NB July 30 (P Pratt *et al.*) The bird was mist-netted, identified, and photographed in the hand. It represents the 2nd New Brunswick and 9th Regional record; most are males from late spring.

The swarms of breeding White-winged Crossbills present in Newfoundland since June 1995 had all but vanished by July 1996 when the cones ran out. Interestingly, Red Crossbills—which had been inexplicably scarce during the White-winged Crossbill occupation—reappeared in mid-July (*fide* KK).

Addenda

There were 2 important sightings received too late for the spring report. A Greater Golden-Plover near Cape Bonavista May 31 was the only report of the spring (*fide* JJ). A Blue Grosbeak at a feeder in Northwest R., Lab., in early May could be the most n. record of the species in North America (JT, *fide* BMT)!

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