

Quebec Region

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What a contrast compared to last summer's great weather! Except for a short period of hot and dry weather in mid-June, summer 1996 was exceptionally cool and wet across most of the province. Heavy rains were responsible for some dramatic situations, especially in the Saguenay and the North Shore regions, where eight inches fell in less than 48 hours July 19–20. It is difficult to appreciate the effect of the bad weather on the reproductive success of bird species in the province, but there were indications that the sudden rise of water in some lakes may have destroyed a few waterbird nests. As a general impression, it seems that the nesting season was otherwise somewhat delayed, by as much as two or three weeks for waterfowl.

Loons to Waterfowl

Pacific Loons are maintaining their presence at Akulivik, *Ungava*, where two adults were discovered July 30 (YG). A Leach's Storm-Petrel spotted at Rivière-Ouelle, *Kamouraska*, June 3 was quite unexpected for the season (LM). An ad. Am. White Pelican at Saint-Fulgence, *Chicoutimi*, July 6–7, furnished a 5th

record for the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region and approximately the 30th for the province (CC, GS *et al.*). Out-of-range Great Cormorants were encountered at Î. aux Basques, *Rivière-du-Loup*, June 9 (V. Proulx), and at Portneuf June 24 (FD, RD). A Double-crested Cormorant reached the LG-2 dam on La Grande Rivière, approximately 200 km n. of the nearest nesting ground in s. James Bay, June 30 (G. Morissette).

A Least Bittern at Saint-Victor June 1 represented a rare local occurrence for *Beauce* (M. Grenier), while the presence of a male July 19 at L'Isle-Verte, *Rivière-du-Loup*, where one had been seen in 1994, suggested that the species may be colonizing the Lower St. Lawrence region. A Great Egret located at Chibougamau June 27 provided a remarkable record so far north (D. Letendre, J. Lapointe). Noteworthy sightings of s. herons included a Snowy Egret at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix, *Upper Richelieu*, June 9 (SD *et al.*), a first summer Little Blue Heron at Î. des Soeurs, *Montréal*, June 29 (PB), and single Cattle Egrets at Saint-Étienne-de-Beauharnois June 8, (PB, W. Wilson) and Cazavie, *Huntingdon*, July 13 (G. Savoie).

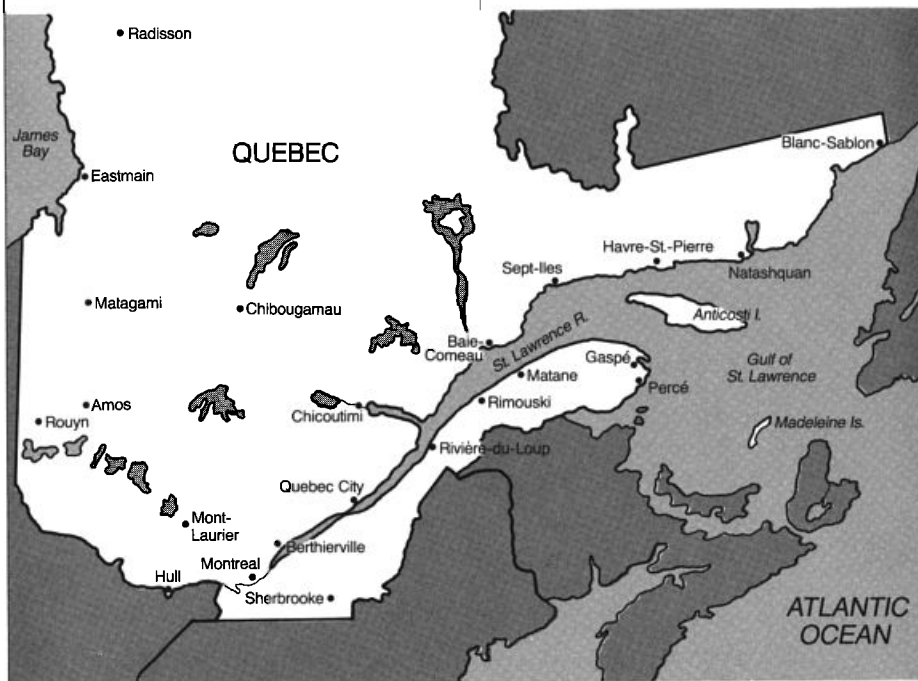
Single Tundra Swans showed up at Saint-Fulgence June 1 (D. Roy), Barachois, *Gaspé*, June 1–2 (J. Robichaud, J. Cayouette), and Mont-Brun, *Abitibi*, June 23–July 31 (SG *et al.*). The two individuals at Akulivik July 30 were within their breeding range (YG). Small flocks of summering Snow Geese continue to grow in s. Québec; birds were reported at Saint-Fulgence, Rivière-Ouelle, Cap Tourmente,

and in the Upper Richelieu valley. A flock of 200 Brant at Missisquoi Bay, *Upper Richelieu*, June 15 probably represented very late northbound migrants (M. Arnaudin, C. Chalk). According to a Canadian Wildlife Service survey conducted in June, the total population of Canada Geese in n. Québec was estimated at 46,000 pairs, an increase of 60% over last year. However, a high proportion had not started to nest by the 3rd week of June because of adverse weather (A. Bourget). While the n. populations of the Canada Goose arouse some concern, the situation is quite different in the south, where summering flocks are now commonplace, sometimes even in urban areas.

Five ♂ Eur. Wigeons turned up in June; nesting still remains to be confirmed. An Am. Wigeon was observed at Kuujuaq, *Ungava*, June 15 (PBab), a n. locality for this species. The reappearance of a Tufted Duck June 1–8 at Baie-du-Fèbre, *Nicolet*, where one had been sighted last April, was especially intriguing (CR). Fourteen young Harlequin Ducks detected on the Bonaventure R. were encouraging (JMP, G. Poirier). A ♀ Red-breasted Merganser accompanying three young at Verdun in late July provided only the 2nd breeding record for the Montréal region (J.-C. Sorel, m.ob.).

Vultures to Gulls

Seen annually since 1990, a Black Vulture visited L'Anse-à-Beaufils, *Gaspé*, June 18 (J. Wiseman). While there were only 3 nests of the Turkey Vulture discovered during the Québec Breeding Bird Atlas project between 1984–1989, 5 nests were located this summer, 3 in localities where the species was known to have nested in the past and 2 in new localities. One was found at Roxton Falls, *Drummondville*, where it was apparently nesting for the 3rd summer (J. Beaugrand), and the other at Saint-Narcisse, *Trois-Rivières* (G. Cossette, M. Savard). These last nests were both located in abandoned sugarhouses. Single nests of the rare Cooper's Hawk located at Grand-Mère July 7 (P. Viola, H. Brunoni) and at Longueuil July 28 (D. Daignault) were welcome finds. Extralimital Red-shouldered Hawks included one at Ruisseau-Bleu, *Bonaventure*, July 7 (PP, J.-R. Lepage) and five at Saint-Fabien, *Rimouski*, June 11 (*vide* J.-R. Pelletier). Two Golden Eagles at Vinton, *Pontiac*, July 5 were unexpected for the season (L. Harvey). For the 2nd consecutive year, the Magdalen Is. hosted a Com. Moorhen at Fatima June 22 (DGG, LD, F. Gariépy), while a bird at Cacouna June 2–July 18 was at the limit of its range (RG *et al.*).



Out-of-range Sandhill Cranes included three at Sainte-Marguerite-Marie, *L. Saint-Jean*, June 4 (J.-F. Ouellet), and singles at Romaine R., *North Shore*, June 27 (E. Lebel) and at Sabrevois, *Upper Richelieu*, June 11 (JGP).

SA The Yellow Rail was studied for a 4th consecutive year in s. Québec, although much less banding was done this year. Still, 19 new rails were banded along the St. Lawrence R., most of them at Î. aux Grues but also at Cacouna and Dundee marshes. Overall, 130 Yellow Rails have been banded from 1993–1996†; some of them moved along the St. Lawrence R. and were afterwards recaptured [this year, as in 1993 (AB 47†: 1087), 1994 (FN 48†: 921), and 1995 (FN 49†: 904)], which provided evidence of the importance of this river as a flyway corridor and as a refuge of some significant Yellow Rail habitat. This year collaborators (PF, SG) informed us that >seven birds were calling at R. Maine June 19, on the n. side of L. Abitibi, where individuals were recorded in the past. At least one bird (maybe two) was also heard at Cap Tourmente July 30 (MR, CM, PL).

Single Am. Avocets at Carleton, *Bonaventure*, June 2 (M. Ouellet, ph.) and at Rivière-Ouelle July 29 (CA) were the first in 2 years for the Region. A Willer seen at Saint-Fulgence June 7–8 (CC, GS *et al.*), and at Chambord June 22–24 (B. Dumont) provided a first record for the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region, while one brightened Pointe-au-Père, *Rimouski*, June 12 (G. Bouchard). Although the Upland Sandpiper has become more regular in recent years at the limits of its range—in the L. Saint-Jean and the Lower St. Lawrence regions—it seems to be more unusual in its stronghold in extreme s. Québec; in the Montréal area, it is now difficult to find one, where they used to be still common less than a decade ago. Monitoring of the population should be seriously considered. Southbound Whimbrels arrived early, as evidenced by the five individuals at Tartigou, *Rimouski*, June 29 (J. Larivée). Last spring's exceptional flight of Marbled Godwits carried on until early June, with a total of seven birds reported June 1–7. Other northbound shorebirds included 600 Semipalmated Sandpipers in the Upper Richelieu valley June 1 (PB), and an imm. Reeve at Cacouna June 1–2 (PF, G. Lemelin *et al.*). Although not unprecedented, a Wilson's Phalarope at Baie-Comeau was a good find (GC *et al.*).

The violent storm of July 19–20 was probably responsible for the appearance of single Parasitic Jaegers at Saint-Vallier, *Bellevue* (RG, AC), and Maizeret, *Québec City* (JL), and of a Long-tailed Jaeger at Point-au-Père July 21 (R. Saint-Laurent, G. Gendron, D. Ruest). For the 2nd consecutive year, Laughing Gulls were in above-average number, with a total of 7 sightings involving a maximum of nine individuals. Single ad. Franklin's Gulls were identified at Pointe-au-Pic, *Charlevoix*, June 1 (RG, AC), La Baie June 4 & 17 (H. Simard *et al.*), and Métaberchouan, *L. Saint-Jean*, June 8 (CC, GS, N. Duchesne). Summering Little Gulls included an adult and immature at La Martinique, *Magdalen Is.*, June 19+ (JMB, DGG, B. Leblanc), a 2nd-summer bird at Saint-Romuald, *Lévis*, July 21 (RG, AC), and a first-summer bird at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu June 29 (PB). Two Iceland Gulls at Matane July 24 included a 2nd-year bird with entirely white primary tips and yellow eyes, possibly *L. glaucooides glaucooides* (ND, L. Roy). Summering Lesser Black-backed Gulls numbered four individuals, all immatures. A Black Tern in the Magdalen Is., July 15–31 (JMB, DGG, C.-A. Gaudet), and two at L. des Jones, *Rimouski*, June 1–16, (J. Munro, F. Gauvin), represented rare local occurrences.

Alcids to Shrikes

A Com. Murre seen from the Saint-Siméon-Rivière-du-Loup ferry June 28 (CM), and an Atlantic Puffin at Lévis June 21 (JL), were quite unexpected this time of the year. Numbers of Black-billed Cuckoos were low compared to last summer, as evidenced by the count of one individual *vs.* 49 last year in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region (*vide* GS).

Single Great Gray Owls at Saint-Nazaire, *L. Saint-Jean*, June 24 (R. Savard, S. Girard) and at Î. aux Lièvres, *Rivière-du-Loup*, through July 14 (J. Bédard), were probably remnants of last winter invasion. In the Abitibi region, where it is known to breed, the species was encountered at 21 sites from May–July, but no evidence of breeding was reported (*vide* PF). After 2 years of exceptional reproductive success, Long-eared Owls do not seem to have bred in the L. Saint-Jean region this summer; no young were detected despite intensive work along roadsides at night (*vide* GS).

The bird of the season was without doubt a ♂ Rufous Hummingbird discovered at a feeder at Lac-Sergent, *Portneuf*, July 21–24 soon after a strong gale (J. Dubé, P. Gamache, B. Gariépy). This is the first documented record for the

Region. An E. Kingbird showed up at Kuujuaq June 3 (P. Bab), a far north location for this species. A pair of Tufted Titmouse with two young at East Farnham, *Iberville*, in late July represented the 2nd confirmed breeding record for the province, while a bird which was heard calling in early June and subsequently observed at a feeder in late July at Québec City (YA, P. Caris) represented the easternmost record on the n. shore of the St. Lawrence R.

The N. Mockingbird made a good showing in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Lower-North-Shore, Anticosti I., and Gaspé regions. Bohemian Waxwings, single or in small flocks, were reported at Katevale, *Orford*, July 23 (C. Dufresne), Bic P.P., June 2 (ND, GS *et al.*) and also from the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region at L. Mithisso July 3 (FG, Li) and L. des Cygnes June 27 (FG, Li). An ad. Loggerhead Shrike was reported at Sainte-Sabine, *Missisquoi*, July 19 (D. Lepage).

Vireos to Finches

Records of Warbling Vireos at the n. edge of their range included singles at Saint-Honoré, *Saguenay*, June 7 (†FG); Carleton, *Bonaventure*, June 9 (RC, †J. Gagnon); Grande-Cascapédia, *Bonaventure*, June 2 (A. Campbell); and two at Pointe-à-la-Croix, *Matapédia*, June 2–July 1 (RC). The only noteworthy warblers of the season were a ♂ Prairie Warbler at Aylmer, *Outaouais*, June 8 (J.-P. Artigau, m.ob.), and two Pine Warblers at L. de la Vieille, La Vérendrye P.P., *Outaouais*, July 8 (B.K. Buttler).

Indigo Buntings included one at a feeder at Lac-Evain, *Abitibi*, June 4 (R. Pelletier, D. Tremblay), a young male at a feeder at Saint-Eusèbe, *Témiscouata*, June (M. Beaulieu), and a male also at a feeder at Grande-Entrée, *Magdalen Is.*, June 4–5 (J.-C. Richard). Many N. Cardinals were reported s. of 48°N, and breeding records included broods at Sillery, *Québec*, (LM) and Lavaltrie June 10 (J. Thibault). A late Am. Tree Sparrow was observed at Amqui, *Matapédia*, June 20 (R. Lang). Clay-colored Sparrow was reported in above-average numbers, with one at Rouyn, *Abitibi*, July 8–9 (J. Lapointe), seven birds in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region, three birds in the Bois-Francs region (*vide* MG), one bird at La Pocatière (CA), and one at Percé June 17–19 (M. Larivée, E. Lavoie). Single Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found June 19 at Sainte-Hélène-de-Mancebourg and at R. Maine, 2 inland localities settled on the n. side of L. Abitibi (PF, SG). Fourteen Com. Redpolls at L. Brulé June 27 and four at Saint-Tite-

des-Caps, *Montmorency*, (H. Mead) were considered late migrants.

Exotics

Two Chinese Geese summered at Laval (*fide* JPP), while the Greylag Goose reported last spring at Î. Bourdon, *Repentigny*, was last seen June 2 (ND, GS). A Chukar at Saint-Basile-le-Grand July 21 was found dead the next day (SD). A Ringed Turtle-Dove was attempting to mate with a Mourning Dove at LeGardeur, *Montréal*, June 6 (R.Dion). A Eur. Goldfinch appeared at a Montreal feeder July 15–18 (*fide* JPP), while a Nutmeg Mannikin was also at a feeder at Saint-Norbert, *Victoriaville*, early July (CR, C. Goyette).

Addendum

A N. Harrier was observed at Kuujuaq May 7 (PBab), farther north than its known breeding range.

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New England Region

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Weather for June and July was marked by a warm, dry start and a cool, wet finish. After a very warm early June, temperatures in the Boston area from mid-month through much of July proved to be slightly cooler than usual. In addition to the coolness of July, the month broke the tradition of dryness that has prevailed in New England over the past several summer seasons, as well as the months since January, and actually ended up being the wettest July in the Boston area since 1988 and the twelfth wettest in 126 years. Hurricane *Bertha*, whose remnants passed just west of Boston July 13, deposited 3.36 inches of rain in Bean Town, which was the greatest single July day total since 1921.

Among the highlights in New England this summer were a long-awaited return in numbers of tubenoses to the inshore waters of Massachusetts; a new northernmost continental record for "Great White" Heron; indications of a possible decline in the Regional breeding status of the Cattle Egret; the return of a Black-tailed Gull to Rhode Island for the second consecutive year; a first Connecticut record for Gull-billed Tern; a problematic and temporarily (?) indeterminate large swift species in Massachusetts; and first Regional breeding records for Blue Grosbeak in Connecticut and Clay-colored Sparrow in Maine.

Abbreviations: A.S.N.H. (*Audubon Society of New Hampshire*); H.B.S.P. (*Hammanassett Beach State Park*); M.V. (*Martha's Vineyard, MA*); M.A.R.C. (*Massachusetts Avian Record Committee*); M.D.F.W. (*Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife*); N. Monomoy I. (*Monomoy N.W.R., MA*); Plum I. (*Parker River N.W.R., MA*).

Loons to Gannets

Always uncommon in New England in summer,

single Red-throated Loons were present at Plum I., July 27 (RH) and N. Monomoy I., July 28 (VL). Significantly more unusual was a carefully described Pacific Loon at Rye Ledge, NH June 14–20 (DA, DE, SM, PH). The identification of this species in non-breeding plumage in summer, is often controversial; however, this individual was in breeding plumage and apparently showed no evidence of the conspicuous white flank patches said to be diagnostic of Arctic Loon. Twenty-four migrating Com. Loons at Provincetown, MA June 1 (BN) was a reminder of how late some loons apparently wait before heading for interior n. lakes. With the continuing decline of breeding Pied-billed Grebes throughout most of New England, a report of a pair with seven young at Calais, VT June 17 (M. Fullerton, *fide* JP) was gratifying, especially since the only other Regional reports were of single grebes from 4 other localities. Tardy (or summering?) Red-necked Grebes included singles at Adison, VT June 10 (B. Gilbert, *fide* JP) and N. Monomoy I., July 18 (E. Pierce, *fide* B.O.) and two throughout the period at E. Gloucester, MA (J. Soucy, *fide* B.O.).

An apparent increase in the local abundance of sand lance (*Anmodytes* sp.) resulted in a dramatic and corresponding increase in the numbers of tubenoses and whales found on the inshore fishing grounds off Massachusetts. Exemplary of this phenomenon was a Stellwagen Bank count of 790 Greater Shearwaters, 1150 Sooty Shearwaters, three Manx Shearwaters, and 1200 Wilson's Storm-Petrels July 18 (RH). Stellwagen

