

Ontario Region

RON RIDOUT

Birders have to be just about the only special interest group that actually takes delight in the passage of hurricanes. While none of us want to see property damage or loss of life, secretly the passage of these storms is often much anticipated, the stronger the storm, the better. Surprisingly, even Canadian birders—however rarely—can be the beneficiaries of this form of storm-driven birding. Such was the case following the passage of hurricane *Fran* through southern Ontario in early September. Dozens of storm-driven birds, including Black-capped Petrels, storm-petrels, American Oystercatchers, Laughing Gulls, and Sooty Terns, dropped on Lake Erie (and, to a lesser extent, Lake Ontario). Rarely has one event overshadowed an entire season of birding as this storm did, providing what many veteran birders described as the most exciting birding of their lives. Simply put, it was “frantastic!”

Ironically, *Fran*—combined with the passage of tropical storm *Fausto*—also had a major effect upon southbound passerines. With the first half of September dismally wet and windy, migrant passerines were bottled up in the north until, with the movement of a strong cold front across the province September 18, they poured out the Region in the course of a few evenings, unseen by human eyes. Both full-time observatories reported some of the lowest numbers of migrants ever, but felt the weather had played a significant role rather than issuing any dire warnings.

Outstanding rarities, apart from the *Fran* waifs, included Prairie Falcon, Gray Kingbird, three Fork-tailed Flycatchers, and a Sage Thrasher. All rarities mentioned in this report are subject to approval by the Ontario Bird Records Committee (O.B.R.C.).

Abbreviations: Pelee (*Pt. Pelee N.P. and vicinity*); L.P.B.O. (*Long Pt. Bird Observatory*); T.C.B.O. (*Thunder Cape Bird Observatory, Thunder Bay*); P.E.Pt. (*Prince Edward Pt., Prince Edward*); Algonquin, Presqu'île and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* refer to counties, districts, or regional municipalities.

Loons to Ibises

Two Red-throated Loons at Toronto Aug. 4 (RS), plus two more at Presqu'île Aug. 29

(J&JT), likely summered on L. Ontario. A migrant at L. Dore, *Renfrew*, Nov. 12 (CM) was quite rare at that inland location. Two Pacific Loons at Quetico P.P., Oct. 2 (DG) furnished *Rainy River's* first record. Noteworthy numbers of Com. Loons included 500 off Kincardine Oct. 22 (JM, AM) and 130 migrating over Belmont Nov. 1 (DM). Respectable counts of Horned Grebes included 227 at Presqu'île Oct. 22 (DMc) and 228 at P.E.Pt. (K.F.N.). A count of 2000 Red-necked Grebes along Manitoulin I.'s n. shore Sept. 8 (BS) was indicative of the area's importance as a staging area for this species. Single Eareds were at Pelee Aug. 10–11 (KM *et al.*), Townsend Sept. 1–10 (JS), Ermo Sept. 2 (DE, RSi), Strathroy Sept. 15 (VM), and Learnington Oct. 28 (AW), while an adult feeding a juvenile at Thedford Aug. 29 (AR) was very intriguing. A lone W. Grebe was reported from the mouth of the Pic R., *Thunder Bay*, Oct. 7 (KW). A trip to Netitshi Pt., *Cochrane*, at the bottom of James Bay yielded one N. Fulmar Oct. 28 (GC, HC), rare but suspected to be regular at that location and time.

SA Without a doubt, the event of the season was the passage of the remnants of hurricane *Fran* through s. Ontario Sept. 7 & 8. While the passage of other hurricanes has brought storm-driven waifs to the Region on several occasions in the past, *Fran* was totally unprecedented in numbers of these birds. With the first sighting of a Black-capped Petrel off Port Colborne shortly before noon Sept. 8, the pelagic bonanza began, continuing over the next several days. Totals of the 5 species displaced from the Atlantic included at least 26 Black-capped Petrels (some of reported as Wilson's), two American Oystercatchers, three–four Sooty Terns, and 10 Laughing Gulls. Intensive surveys of beaches on Lakes Erie and Ontario turned up 20 dead Black-capped Petrels (plus three on the United States side of the lakes) and one Sooty Tern (plus another in New York). With 26 Black-capped Petrels found dead or observed in distant locales on the lakes, and assuming that many more went unseen and died un-found, a conservative estimate of 70 Black-capped Petrels displaced by hurricane *Fran* to Ontario does not seem unreasonable. The reported sightings of the 5 species are listed in Table 1 and most were provided by Curry, who chronicled the details of *Fran's* passage in an excellent article in the December 1996 issue of *Birders Journal*. Details of the specimens are listed in that article as well.

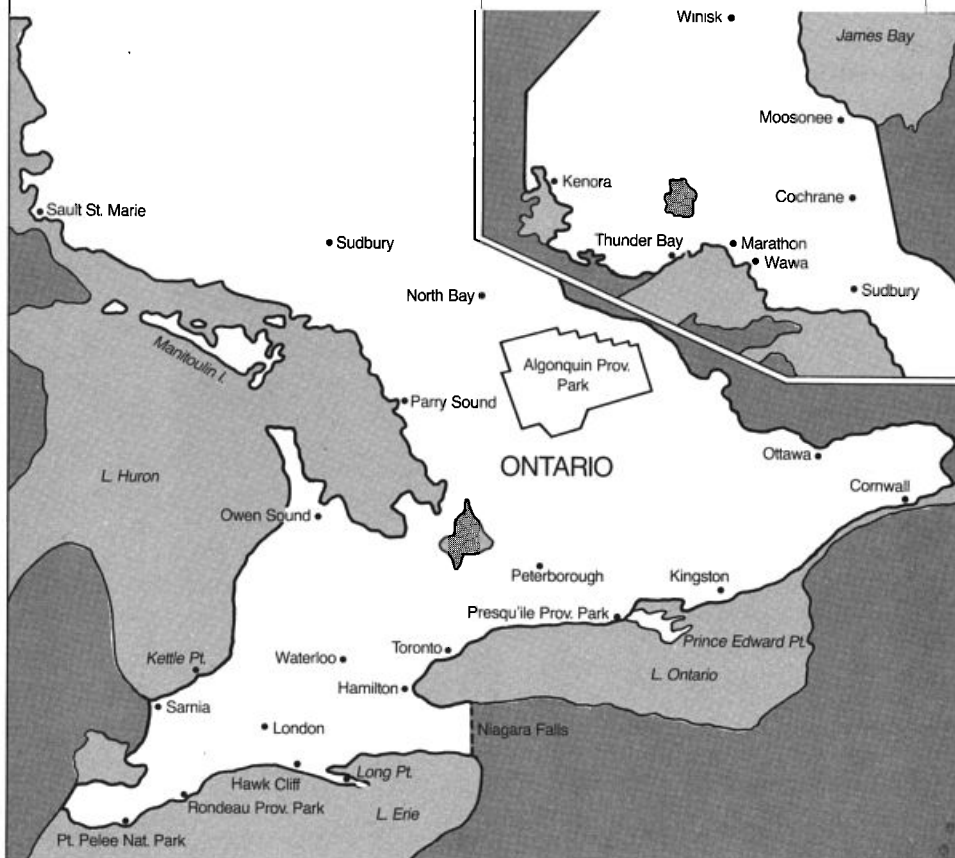


Table 1. Sightings of birds displaced to Ontario by hurricane Fran

Black-capped Petrel

1	Sept. 8	L. Erie @ Port Colborne (AW)
3	Sept. 8	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (RC, JL, JO et al.)
1	Sept. 9	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (GC, AM)
1	Sept. 12	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (WD)
2	Sept. 14	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (m.ob.)
2	Sept. 15	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (m.ob.)
1	Sept. 15	L. Erie @ Thunder Bay Niagara (RC)
1	Sept. 16	L. Erie @ Pt. Pelee (AW)
1	Sept. 16	L. Ontario @ Van Wagner's Beach Hamilton Wentworth (WW)
1	Sept. 17	L. Ontario @ Van Wagner's Beach (RC, RD, JO et al.)
1	Sept. 17	L. Ontario @ Fifty Pt. Niagara (JO)
1	Sept. 18	L. Ontario @ Fifty Pt. (TH et al.)
1	Sept. 18	L. Ontario @ Rattray's Marsh Peel (GC)

Storm-Petrels

1 (unidentified to species)	Sept. 9	L. Erie @ Port Colborne (BC, RD, GC, WL)
1 (reported as Wilson's)	Sept. 9	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (DC)
3 (reported as Wilson's)	Sept. 10	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (GC, WL, AM)
1 (reported as Wilson's)	Sept. 13	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (JL)
1 (unidentified to species)	Sept. 14	L. Erie @ Port Colborne (JL)

American Oystercatcher

2	Sept. 9	L. Erie @ Port Colborne (M.&DH et al.)
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Sooty Tern

1 (juvenile)	Sept. 8	L. Ontario @ Grafton Northumberland (JJ)
1 (juvenile)	Sept. 8	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (JL)
1 (adult)	Sept. 8	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (m.ob.)
1 (adult)	Sept. 9	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (HC, DSA)
1 (adult)	Sept. 10	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (WL)

Laughing Gull

4 (3 first basic + 1 second basic)	Sept. 8-15	L. Erie @ Fort Erie (m.ob.)
1 (adult basic)	Sept. 13	L. Erie @ Long Pt. (JMH)
1 (first alternate)	Sept. 17	L. Ontario @ Oshawa (BH)
1 (first basic)	Sept. 21	L. Ontario @ Hamilton (KM)
1 (first basic)	Sept. 22	L. Ontario @ Van Wagner's Beach (m.ob.)
1 (first basic)	Sept. 28	Ottawa (BD)
1 (first basic)	Oct. 20	L. Ontario @ Hamilton (RC, JH, JO)

A juv. N. Gannet seen at Ottawa Nov. 10 (MT *et al.*) may have been the same bird found starving at Pakenham Nov. 12 (MTh). Individual Am. White Pelicans were seen at Elmira Aug. 20 (HW), Wildwood L., *Oxford*, Aug. 30-Sept. 12 (JMH, v.o.), Pelee Sept. 17 (PP, THi, AW), Rice L., *Northumberland*, Oct. 3-5 (AWi), and Wheatley Oct. 31+ (m.ob.), while two at T.C.B.O., Oct. 5 were late there. Continued high counts of Double-crested Cormorants included 1100 at Long Pt., Sept. 3 (L.P.B.O.) and 1200 at Toronto Aug. 31 (NM). Southern herons included a Snowy Egret at Pickering Sept. 12 (TC), a Tricolored Heron at Amherst I., *Lennox Addington*, Aug. 22-Sept. 6 (AS, v.o.), and 19 Cattle Egrets, the most noteworthy involving individuals at Parkin Twp., *Manitoulin*, Oct. 17 (DCr), Pembroke

Oct. 24-31 (MD), Spring Bay, *Manitoulin*, Nov. 2 (RJ), and three at Ft. Frances Oct. 26 (RSi). A Glossy Ibis was at Aylmer Oct. 26 (S&JSa), while individuals at Niagara Falls Oct. 17 (DMi) and Port Rowan Nov. 10 (PPr) and two at Rondeau Oct. 22 (RH, MM) were reported as *plegadis*.

Waterfowl to Raptors

A count of 85 Tundra Swans at Kingston Nov. 3 (K.F.N.) was notable that far east. Sightings of Greater White-fronted Geese included lone birds at Wolf R., *Thunder Bay*, Sept. 18 (MK), Belwood L., *Wellington*, Sept. 26 (RvT), the Upper Canada Bird Sanctuary *Dundas*, *Stormont*, and *Glengarry*, Oct. 25 (BD), Ottawa Nov. 1+ (BD), and Dover Twp., *Kent*, Nov. 12 (PAW), while nine were seen at Netitishi

Pt., *Cochrane*, Oct. 29 (HC). High counts of Snow Geese included 800 at Rainy R., Oct. 28 (DE, RSi) and, in the south, 200 at Hillman Marsh, *Essex*, Nov. 2 (CMD, MFr), 151 at Holiday Beach, *Essex*, Nov. 22 (AC), and 85 at Port Bruce Nov. 2 (RKi). Ross' sightings were confined to the north at Netitishi Pt., with one there Nov. 1 and six Nov. 2 (GC, HC, DT). A count of 17,433 Brant heading S past Netitishi Pt., Nov. 2 (HC, GC, DTI) was followed by 500 at Ottawa Nov. 3 (BD), 450 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, Nov. 8 (DL), and a record 230 farther west at Woodstock the same day (JMH, LO). Sightings of *hutchinsii* Canada Geese included singles at Toronto Oct. 9 (RY) and Pelee Nov. 19 (AW), as well as two at Wildwood L., Nov. 9 (JMH). Lone Eur. Wigeon were at Powassan Aug. 7 (RTa) and Kingston Nov. 2 (JE). High counts of Am. Wigeon included 3500 at Kingston Oct. 22 (K.F.N.) and 11,450 at Long Pt., Oct. 17 (RK). While counts of 1275 Redheads at Holiday Beach Oct. 19 (AC) and 1500 at Wolfe I., *Frontenac*, Nov. 10 (M&JE) were notable, the species continued a recent steady decline at Long Pt., with a peak of just 950 Oct. 31 (RK). Counts as recent as 1992 had exceeded 17,000 birds. Noteworthy counts of Ring-necked Ducks included 4300 at Kingston Nov. 3 (K.F.N.) and 6050 at Long Pt., Oct. 17 (RK). The Thunder Bay Tufted Duck, which first appeared July 8, was last seen Oct. 6 (m.ob.). The only King Eiders of the period involved lone birds at P.E.Pt., Oct. 26 (JE, RDW) and Sault Ste. Marie Nov. 27+ (m.ob.). Lone Harlequin Ducks were seen at Toronto Oct. 22 (RS), Kincardine Oct. 29 (AM), Hamilton Nov. 3 (KM, RW), and Sarnia Nov. 10 (AR). At Sault Ste. Marie, a lone bird appeared Oct. 12 and was joined by five others by Nov. 24 (m.ob.), a record Ontario count. High scoter counts at Rondeau included 52 Blacks Nov. 9 (SC) and 250 Surfs Nov. 11 (PAW), while a count of 2500 Com Goldeneyes of Stoney Cr., Nov. 10 (RC, JO) was notable. Ottawa's Barrow's Goldeneye returned for the winter Nov. 3 (TB). Other noteworthy counts of waterfowl included 1100 Bufflehead at Kingston Nov. 3 (K.F.N.), 1500 Com. Mergansers inland at Guelph L., Nov. 16-23 (BW, DT, RvT), and while a count of 1000 Ruddy Ducks at Port Stanley Oct. 20 (ES) was a record count for *Elgin*, a count of 5800 at Long Pt., Nov. 14 (RK) was likely an all-time provincial high.

A tally of 56 Bald Eagles at the Atikokan dump Nov. 4 (DE) was the highest number of non-migrating birds in the province in recent memory. A count of

359 Red-shouldered Hawks at P.E. Pt., Nov. 3 (K.F.N.) was an outstanding total, far exceeding any one day maximum at the traditional hawk watches farther west. Interesting trends at the 3 hawk watches included: well-above average numbers of Turkey Vultures, both eagles continuing to do well, and Peregrines above average over the long-term but below recent years. There was some concern over the big drop in N. Harrier and Sharp-shinned Hawk numbers, though a definite trend has not yet been established. Season totals for the 3 sites are listed in Table 2. High Broad-winged counts of 1530 at Cranberry Marsh (JBa), 3000 at Leamington (AW), and 38,170 at Hawk Cliff, *Elgin* (RHu), all Sept. 18, plus 3056 at Toronto (NM) and 53,273 at Holiday Beach (AC) Sept. 19, coincided with the passage of the first cold front Sept. 18, after weeks of wet weather. Reports of Swainson's Hawks came from Gordon Twp., *Manitoulin*, Sept. 19 (DB) and Hawk Cliff Sept. 30 (RHu). Very early Rough-leggeds were seen at Holiday Beach Sept. 19 (AC) and Rondeau Sept. 20 (KB). Despite these early dates, the seasonal movement of this species was no more than average. Sightings of Golden Eagles dropped to 184 across the province, down from the past 2 years but still above the long-term average. After 1995's remarkable count, 1996 fall numbers of Peregrines dropped to 182, still above the long-term average. An well-studied imm. *Prairie Falcon* at Long Pt., Aug. 24 (PPr, CC *et al.*) was that area's first and only the 2nd for Ontario. Gyrfalcons totaled 13, all in c. or n. Ontario.

Rails to Gulls

High counts of Am. Coots included 750 each at Long Pt., Oct. 31 (RK) and Kingston Nov. 3 (K.F.N.) and 1650 at Erieau Oct. 30 (KB, JB, SC). Sandhill Cranes continued to do well in c. and s.w. Ontario. A peak of 454 on Manitoulin Is., Oct. 24 (m.ob.) provided the highest recent count there. High counts to the east included seven at Woodville Sept. 30 (RB) and 10 at Carlsbad Springs Oct. 27 (m.ob.). One of the few shorebirds to appear in good numbers, high counts of Am. Golden Plover included 275 at Shippans I., *Cochrane*, Sept. 10 (BD), 300 at Presqu'île Sept. 12 (J.&JT), and an exceptional record of 600 at Niagara-on-the-Lake Sept. 28 (KR). A lone Piping Plover furnished an unusual fall record at Pelee Sept. 16 (C&RM). A single Am. Avocet was seen at Blenheim Aug. 27–28 (SC, KB, JB), while two were there Sept. 8–18 (BM *et al.*). Willet sightings totaled 14, with one at Ottawa Aug. 27 (BD) the far-

Table 2. Hawk totals at three Ontario stations, Autumn 1996. Long-term averages are indicated for each station.

	Cranberry Marsh ¹		Hawk Cliff ²		Holiday Beach ³	
	<i>Durham</i>		<i>Elgin</i>		<i>Essex</i>	
	1996	1990–95	1996	1982–95	1996	1982–95
Turkey Vulture	1652	1407	4393	3868	19645	11187
Osprey	86	71	142	112	109	112
Bald Eagle	19	19	106	39	22	37
N. Harrier	76	221	399	943	346	1037
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1363	1664	5775	8518	10964	14117
Cooper's Hawk	42	90	557	917	507	713
N. Goshawk	13	30	52	45	22	40
Red-shouldered Hawk	7	86	268	238	416	1114
Broad-winged Hawk	2423	6315	47552	12709	108480	43059
Red-tailed Hawk	527	1156	2245	3339	6727	7417
Rough-legged Hawk	21	84	33	45	76	146
Golden Eagle	9	12	61	31	79	54
Am. Kestrel	378	721	2350	2823	1951	3844
Merlin	17	44	52	70	47	53
Peregrine	14	26	83	44	56	34
Unidentified	76	262	33	596	87	167
TOTALS	6723	12208	64101	34337	149534	83131

1 (JBa *et al.* 1996 Sept. 1–Nov. 29, 71 days)

2 (RHu *et al.* 1996 Aug. 10–Nov. 29, 97 days)

3 (AC *et al.* 1996 Sept. 1–Nov. 30, 91 days)

thest east. Whimbrel totals were very low, with just 13 birds reported. Twenty-two widely scattered Hudsonian Godwits were reported, slightly above the fall average. Marbled Godwits included one each at Hamilton Aug. 8 (RD) and Blenheim Aug. 20 (SC, KB, JB), while two were on Shippans I., Sept. 12 (BD). High counts of the smaller shorebirds included 400 Sanderlings at Presqu'île Sept. 12 (J.&JT), 260 Semipalmated Sandpipers at St. Davids Aug. 4 (KR, ASm, JBl), 25 Baird's at Copper Cliff Aug. 29 (JLe, CB), 3500 Dunlin on Shippans I., Sept. 12 (BD), and 24 Stilt Sandpipers at Rainy R., Sept. 2 (RSi, DE). Western Sandpipers totaled 12 birds, all within the expected time frame and range. Sightings of Purples included singles at Erieau Nov. 2 (JB, KB), Toronto Nov. 4 (RS), plus two at Presqu'île Oct. 31 (DS), Ottawa Nov. 3 (WC), and Port Weller Nov. 10 (JBl, MM), and four at Niagara Falls Nov. 30 (MMo *et al.*). Always uncommon, Buff-breasted Sandpipers put on the best showing in years with 84 tallied, including record counts of six at Atikokan Aug. 22 (DG) and 19 at Guelph Sept. 18 (RvT), plus 32 at Pelee Aug. 26 (AW). Individual Reeves were at Amherstview Sept. 15 (RDW, JE) and again Oct

14 (RDW). Red-necked Phalaropes totaled a respectable 20 with one at L. Opeongo, Algonquin, Aug. 14 (KS) considered the most unusual location, while Reds amounted to 21 sightings with three at Ft. Erie Sept. 8 (AW, SP, GC) the earliest.

All three jaegers seemed to have benefited from a reported lemming boom in the Canadian Arctic during the 1996 summer. Numbers of all 3 species exceeded the remarkable fall of 1993, with both Parasitics and Long-taileds setting record totals. Pomarines totaled 21 with >half from w. L. Ontario. Sightings began as early as Sept. 6 at Hamilton (RD). Away from the south, a dark phase was at Netitishi Pt., Nov. 4 (RS *et al.*) while two at Janet Head, *Manitoulin*, Sept. 8 (BS) furnished that island's first record. A total of 185 Parasitics may have involved some duplication on w. L. Ontario, but even removing a few from that total cannot diminish an astounding show. It included 31 birds migrating over w. Hamilton Oct. 7 (WS). A minimum of 18 Long-taileds included ≥ 12 on w. L. Ontario Aug. 27–Oct. 20 (m.ob.), an immature found dead at Long Pt., Aug. 30 (JR), and ≥ 5 birds at Ft. Erie, adding to the *Fran* bonanza there, Sept. 8 & 14 (m ob)

Numbers of Franklin's Gulls increased to 13, with the earliest at Whitefish L., *Thunder Bay*, Aug. 10 (BA) and the latest at Niagara Falls Nov. 17 (KR). A flock of eight migrating past Holiday Beach Oct. 26 (AC) was a record total there and perhaps all of L. Erie. Little Gulls totaled well above average, buoyed by a count of 120 off Port Dover Nov. 3 (L.P.B.O.). Single Black-headed Gulls were at Holland Landing Aug. 31 (DMi) and Ft. Erie Sept. 14 (JL). Reports of four Mew Gulls (all immatures) matched the high of 1992 and included one each at Misery Bay, *Manitoulin*, Aug. 10 (CB, DB) and Wildwood L., *Oxford*, Oct. 12 (JMH, WL), while one at Niagara Nov. 10 (SS *et al.*) was thought to be the subspecies *brachyrhynchus*, differentiating it from one there Nov. 17 believed to be the nominate *canus* (RC *et al.*). At least one California Gull was present on the Niagara R., Nov. 3–30 (WD *et al.*), with two seen Nov. 23–24. One of the birds was believed to be the smaller, darker subspecies *californicus* (RP, RC, JD, m.ob.). Lesser Black-backed Gulls matched last fall's record total of 45 birds with the usual hotspots of Niagara with eight and Nepean with six, while six at Frenchman's Bay, *Durham*, Oct. 10 (BH) and a total of five at Maple Oct. 16 & Nov. 27 (GB) were noteworthy. Sightings of Black-legged Kittiwakes increased to 40 birds with the bulk on w. L. Ontario, while one at L. Dore, *Renfrew*, Nov. 11 (MF) for the 2nd consecutive autumn was exceptional. Eleven Sabine's Gulls were all on Lakes Erie and Ontario with the exception of a bird at Moosonee Sept. 11 (BD).

Terns to Flycatchers

An ad. Arctic Tern at Sandbanks P.P., *Prince Edward*, Sept. 10 (Y&DBr, JDe), and a juvenile at Pelee (that area's first) Sept. 26 (AW) may well have been additional victims of *Fran*. The first in what was to become a strong southern influx of Snowy Owls appeared at Ottawa Oct. 31 (BD). Northern Hawk Owls began an exceptional northern exodus, with the first at T.C.B.O., Sept. 13; reports reached 43 by the end of November. Hotspots included Sudbury with six, North Bay with eight, and 15 different birds on Manitoulin I. It may be that Boreals moved south in equally strong numbers. At least 11 individuals of this difficult-to-find species were reported, with the farthest south at Toronto Nov. 24 (CM, LM). At T.C.B.O. an exceptional 228 N. Saw-whet Owls were banded during the season. One incredible night, Oct. 13, 99 birds were caught, including one Boreal that escaped

before it was bagged! A freshly dead Whip-poor-will found at Pelee Nov. 16 was record late there (RA). Good counts of migrating Chimney Swifts involved 582 at Toronto Sept. 17 (NM) and 600 at Ft. Erie Sept. 28 (RC, JO). A *Selasphorus* hummingbird appeared at Union, *Essex*, Oct. 15 and remained, unidentified, through the period (GF *et al.*). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Pine Bay, *Thunder Bay*, Nov. 18 (SI) was exceptionally late for that district. Fourteen Olive-sided Flycatchers counted at Pelee Aug. 10 (m.ob.) furnished a record number of this seldom observed migrant. A Yellow-bellied was record late at Wingham Oct. 19 (JM), furnishing one of the province's latest dates for the species. Rarely seen in fall migration, an Acadian was at Norwich Aug. 4 (JMH). Single W. Kingbirds were at Harrington Aug. 17 (MC), Toronto Aug. 31 (NM, CMc, AJ), and very late at Thunder Bay Nov. 2 (SP, NE, v.o.). Ontario's 5th **Gray Kingbird** was found at Pelee Oct. 5 (PD, PP, v.o.), furnishing that area's 2nd record. Ironically, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, which had been present in the same area from Sept. 5, disappeared Oct. 4 (GR, NMc, m.ob.). With just 2 previous provincial records, the season's total of three **Fork-tailed Flycatchers** was truly astounding. Separate individuals were at Arner, *Essex*, Sept. 3–13 (MMa, m.ob.), Nobleton Sept. 25–26 (JJe, m.ob.), and Dorland, *Lennox Addington*, Oct. 29 (MG, WDa, TBr).

Larks to Warblers

Notable counts of Horned Larks included 700 at Copper Cliff Oct. 26 (CB, JLe) and 1500 at Nepean Oct. 12 (BD). With a seasonal count of 165,898, Blue Jays hit a record low at Holiday Beach (AC). A Com. Raven at Brighton Oct. 14 (DMc) was south of the usual range. The 2nd-ever Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was banded at T.C.B.O., Sept. 13 and was followed by another there Oct. 3. Coincidentally, records of the rarer thrushes were all of individual birds. The lone N. Wheatear of the season spent one day at Port Hope Sept. 18 (PBr). A Mt. Bluebird at Algonquin Oct. 19 (CJ) provided the park's first record. The only Townsend's Solitaire was at Thorold Nov. 27 (DC). As with the others, a Varied Thrush at Elliot L., Nov. 19 (EM) was the only sighting. Northern Mockingbirds were as far north as Little Current Nov. 30 (HB) and T.C.B.O., Sept. 6. A **Sage Thrasher** at Ft. Frances Oct. 28 (RSi) furnished that district's 2nd-ever record. While hundreds of Bohemian Waxwings were reported in the Atikokan area throughout the season (DE), almost

none was reported e. of there. Singles were reported at Algonquin Oct. 27 (MR) and Toronto Nov. 18 (NM). In an above-average N. Shrike year, the first birds were at Hamilton Oct. 14 (RD, RC, MMi) and Presqu'île Oct. 15 (J&CG). The only Loggerhead Shrike of the fall was at Evansville Aug. 1 (DB).

A Warbling Vireo at T.C.B.O., Oct. 16 provided the observatory's first record. Record-late vireos and warblers included a Philadelphia Vireo at Wildwood L., Nov. 9 (JMH), a Red-eyed at Rondeau Nov. 11 (PAW), an Orange-crowned Warbler at Pt. Clark, *Bruce*, Nov. 13 (DF), a Nashville at Pittock L., *Oxford*, Nov. 3 (JMH), a N. Parula at Algonquin Sept. 22 (MH, WCr), a Yellow-rumped there Nov. 17 (RT), a Connecticut at Long Pt., Oct. 7 (L.P.B.O.), and an exceptional Yellow-breasted Chat at Thunder Bay Nov. 1–23 (m.ob.). High counts of warblers were almost nonexistent, with 45 Black-throated Blues at Pelee Sept. 17 (AW), 1500 Yellow-rumped at Long Pt., Oct. 23 (L.P.B.O.), and 40 Black-and-whites at Pelee Aug. 26 (THi) the exceptions. Rare or unusual warblers included a Black-throated Gray banded at Toronto Sept. 14 (TK, RKe); a yellow Palm at Long Pt., Oct. 11 (JMH); individual Worm-eaters at Long Pt., Aug. 22 (L.P.B.O.), Walsingham Aug. 28 (DBu), and Pelee Sept. 21 (GCa); and a Yellow-breasted Chat at Indian Pt., *Manitoulin*, Sept. 19 (DB).

Tanagers to Finches

Algonquin continued its string of record-breaking dates with a late Scarlet Tanager Oct. 13 (RT, JK). The summering ♂ Blue Grosbeak was last seen at Cedar Springs Sept. 18 (KB). An Indigo Bunting at Long Pt., Nov. 8 (L.P.B.O.) was record late there. Single Dickcissels were at Toronto Oct. 3 (LN) and e. of Normandale Nov. 9 (JL, AK), while 2 pairs formed a small breeding colony at Pelee in August (SP, AW). Lone Le Conte's Sparrows were at Algonquin Sept. 22–24 (WCr *et al.*), Toronto Sept. 29 (RS, AA), and Long Pt., Oct. 28 (TM), while single Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were at Pelee Oct. 3 (THi, PP) and Toronto Oct. 5 (CMc) with Dundas's annual fall count peaking at five birds Oct. 12 (LB, DCa). The single Harris's Sparrow was at Hillman Marsh Oct. 21 (SS). Two Lapland Longspurs at Presqu'île Sept. 21 (WG) were record early there.

Sixty E. Meadowlarks migrating across Rice L., *Northumberland*, Oct. 25 (WS) was notable. The lone Yellow-headed Blackbird of the season was at Evansville Oct. 17 (DB). A Rusty Blackbird at Long Pt., Sept. 2 (JG) was record early there,

one was very late at Matachewan Nov. 30 (LT), while high counts included 150 at Beachville Nov. 6 (JMH) and 300 at Portland Oct. 30 (PH). A count of 100 Brewer's Blackbirds at Trout L., Oct. 1 (RTa) was noteworthy there. A migrant at Brighton Nov. 11 (DS) was unusual. A Baltimore Oriole at Ottawa Nov. 30 (TG) was exceptionally late there. While Pine Grosbeaks remained in c. and n. Ontario, singles at Thornhill Sept. 1 (EG) and Pittock L., Nov. 3 (JMH) were noteworthy. Heading in the opposite direction, lone House Finches at Thunder Bay Nov. 4 (GW) and Atikokan Nov. 16 (DE) were notable. Crossbills also remained in the north, so a single at Long Pt., Aug. 2 (PPr) and five at Port Royal Oct. 16 (FW, TW) were of interest, as were two White-winged at Kingston Oct. 22 (KE) and Plainfield Nov. 28 (AB). The same was the case with lone Com. Redpolls at Oshawa Oct. 23 (DR) and Pelee Nov. 22 (DD).

Subregional editors (boldface), Contributors (italics), and Cited Observers: A. Adamo, *R. Andrie* (RAn), B. Atkinson, R. Attilio, D. Bailey, **M. Bain**, *J. Barker* (JBa), T. Beck, C. Bell, G. Bennett, J. Black (JBl), A. Boisvert, Y. & D. Bree (Y.&DBr), P. Bridges (PBr), T. Brownell (TBr), *D. Bucknell* (DBl), J. Burk, **K. Burk**, *P. Burke* (PBu), L. Burr, D. Burton (DBu), R. Burton, D. Campbell, D. Campbell (DCa), M. Carnerie, *G. Carpentier* (GCa), S. Charbonneau, B. Charlton, *A. Chartier*, **T. Cheskey** (TCH), W. Clark, G. Coady, T. Cosburn, D. Crawford (DCr), **W. Crins** (WCr), C. Crocker, H. Currie, R. Curry, **E. Czerwinski**, W. Davis (WDa), P. Desjardins, J. Dewey (JDe), **B. DiLabio**, **R. Dobos**, M. Dougherty, D. Dufour, J. Dunn, W. D'Anna, K. Edwards, **D. Elder**, M. & J. Ellis, **N. Escott**, **D. Fidler**, G. Fisher, M. Fleugel, M. Francis (MFr), E. Gillian, W. Gilmour, M. Gingrich, T. Glass, J. Gobell (JGo), J. & C. *Goodwin*, D. Graham, M. & D. Hart, R. Hart, B. Henshaw, J. Heslop, T. Hince (THi), P. Hockey, T. Hofmann, **J.M. Holdsworth**, *K. Hooles*, *R. Hubert* (RHu), S. Illingworth, J. Jalava, A. Jano, J. Jensen (JJe), R. Johnson, C. Jones, J. Kamstra, A. Keaveney, T. Kelley, R. Kellner (RKe), Kingston Field Naturalists, R. Kingswood (RKi), M. Klitsch, *R. Knapton*, **S. LaForest**, J. Lamey, **J. Lemon** (JLe), W. Lindley, D. Lockery, C. MacDonald (CMd), J. Macey (JMa), M. Malone (MMa), B. Mann, V. Marques, D. Martin, C. & R. McKay (C.&RMk), C. McLaughlan (CMc), K. McLaughlin, M. McLean, N. McPherson (NMc), D. McRae (DMc), A. McTavish, E. Meissner, **A. Mess** (AMe),

C. Michener, **J. Miles**, M. Mills (MMi), D. Milsom (DMi), M. Morgante (MMo), L. Morse, N. Murr, T. Murray, M. Myslowka (MMy), L. Nichols, *J. Nicholson*, J. Olmsted, L. Omorean, S. Phippen (SPh), S. Pike, R. Pittaway, P. Pratt, **P. Prior** (PPr), **P. Read**, *P. Richter* (PRi), **A. Rider**, G. Riley, **K. Roy**, D. Ruch, M. Runtz, **D. Sadler** (DSr), D. Salisbury (DSa), S. & J. Sandusky (S.&JSa), A. Scott, D. Shanahan, S. Shaum, J. Simms, R. Simms (RSi), A. Smith (ASm), **R. Smith**, W. Smith, E. Smout, **M. Smout**, W. Stone (WSt), B. Stout, K. Symington, **R. Tafel** (RTa), D. Tannahill, D. Tate (DTa), M. Tate, M. Thompson (MTh), *J. & J. Thomson*, **R. Tozer**, R. van Twest, K. Wade, **R.D. Weir**, G. Williams, A. Wilson (AWi), W. Wilson, P.A. Woodliffe, F. Woodrow, T. Woodrow, **A. Wormington**, **B. Wyatt**, R. Yukich

— *Ron Ridout, Long Pt. Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, ON, Canada NOE 1M0.*

Appalachian Region

GEORGE A. HALL

It was a fall season of extremes, both in weather and in the birding. While overall temperatures were quite mild, August was slightly warmer than normal, September and October were cooler, and November was quite a bit cooler. September had rainfall greatly in excess of normal—2.66 inches above average at Pittsburgh. The other months were drier than average.

The feature of the weather was hurricane *Fran*, whose remnants moved through east West Virginia and west Virginia September 6–8, bringing heavy rains, as much as 13 inches in some places. Some areas of the West Virginia highlands were hit with the fourth major flood event of the year. *Fran* did make some interesting birding in western Pennsylvania. Besides *Fran*, at least two other tropical disturbances brought heavy rain to the eastern part of the Region. On November 10–11 an early-season snow storm deposited 15–20 inches of snow on Erie, Pennsylvania, and other northern areas.

Besides the hurricane systems, there were a number of good frontal passages. A

