

Atlantic Provinces



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It was an average autumn for weather and rarities in the Atlantic Provinces. There was one new species for the Region—a MacGillivray's Warbler in Nova Scotia. Highlights came from various compass directions. The Region's second Fea's Petrel appeared in Newfoundland. One of the few substantiated King Rails for the Region crashed into a Nova Scotia window. Six White-winged Doves, 2 Fork-tailed Flycatchers, a Mississippi Kite, and a Mountain Bluebird were among the other entertainers of the season.

Abbreviations: C.B.I (Cape Breton Island, NS); C.S.I. (Cape Sable Island, NS); G.M.I. (Grand Manan Island, NB), S.P.M. (St. Pierre et Miquelon).

Loons Through Cranes

A **Fea's Petrel** well-studied and photographed on the edge of the continental shelf 100 mi s. of the Burin Pen., NF, 13 Aug (Jwe) was the first for Newfoundland and second for Canada.

The previous record was also on the edge of the continental shelf, in Nova Scotia waters 180 mi to the wsw., raising hopes the species is regular along the Region's rarely visited southern edge of the continental shelf. Several Cory's Shearwaters, a provincial rarity, were noted in the same area mid-Aug (JWe). The only other Cory's was off G.M.I. 14 Aug (RI). Late dates for Greater Shearwater were 13 on 12 Nov from Cabot Strait ferry (RK) and 3 on 30 Nov near Machias Seal I., NB (DI). An **American White Pelican** near Alberton, PEI, 4 Sep (BR) was probably the same bird that showed up at French L., NB, 19–24 Sep (fide DG).

A late and rare Least Bittern was at The Hawk, C.S.I. 12 Nov (fide MN). Great Egret reports totaled 7 in Nova Scotia, 3 in New Brunswick, one at S.P.M., and a late one in Newfoundland 16 Oct–7 Dec. The only Snowy Egret appeared 10–16 Oct at Miquelon, S.P.M. (RE). Most unusual of the 4 Regional Little Blue Herons was a late individual 30 Nov+ at Shediac, NB (JP). A Tricolored Heron was at Cape Light, C.S.I., NS, during the first two weeks of Aug (m.ob.). Six Cattle Egrets showed up in sw. Nova Scotia during the first week of Nov (fide RK). Yellow-crowned Night-Heron reports were one 18 Aug at C.S.I. (MN, JN),

one 17–22 Sep at River Bourgeois, C.B.I. (fide RK), and a late adult 21 Oct at Castalia Marsh, G.M.I. (PP). An unusual Glossy Ibis was at Schooner Pond, C.B.I. 13–14 Oct (CM, RK). A Green Heron was a rarity at Bear Cove, NF, 8 Oct (JWe).

Maximum counts of Turkey Vulture were 15 on 29 Aug in Kings Co., NB (JWi) and 20 on 12 Nov on Brier I., NS (EM). An imm. Greater White-fronted Goose was at Lanark, NS, 10–29 Oct (RL). Two Gadwalls at St. Shotts, NF, 8 Oct were provincial rarities (BMt). Eurasian Wigeon totaled 4 in NB, 7 in NS, 3 at S.P.M., and 10 in NF. The only Common Teal identified was a male at St. John's, NF, 24 Nov (TB). Tufted Ducks arrived nearly simultaneously in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, with one 21 Oct at Cole Harbour, NS (fide JN) and one 23 Oct, peaking at 7 during Nov, at St. John's, NF (BM et al.). Rare in the Region, but reported with greater frequency in recent years, a **Mississippi Kite** was on Brier I., NS, 23 Sep (RS et al.) and 2 Oct (EM). Impressive raptor day totals from Brier I., NS, were 400 Broad-winged Hawks 24 Sep (RS et al.) and 500+ Sharp-shinned Hawk 2 Oct (EM). An ad Golden Eagle was at Waterside Marsh, NB, 24 Oct (DC, MM) and an imm. was at Hampton, PEI, 16 Oct (DM). An impressive 352 American Kestrels flew s. over Bon Portage I., NS, 23 Sep (fide RK). A dark Gyrfalcon was at C.S.I. 26 Nov (MN). An imm. **King Rail** made fatal contact with a window in Glace Bay, NS, 23 Oct, furnishing one of few substantiated records for the Region (fide RK, IM). A Common Moorhen was a rarity at St. John's, NF, 29 Nov–5 Dec (RD et al.). Sandhill Cranes were 2 at Salisbury, NB, 19 Sep (AS), 2 at Nackwack, NB, 4–15 Oct (EMa), one at Nauwigewauk, NB, 28 Nov (SF), one at Lanark, NS, 1 Oct–29 Nov (RL), and one at Shubenacadie, NS, during Oct (fide RK).

Shorebirds Through Terns

Three pairs of American Oystercatchers, plus 3 offspring from two successful nests, departed C.S.I. by late Sep (MN, JN). Newfoundland recorded its first **American Avocets**, with a total of 4 individuals: at Cape Freels 6 Aug–4 Sep (KB et al.), at Cape Broyle 21–22 Aug (DF), at The Goulds 22 Aug (JPr) and again at nearby Kelligrews 26–29 Aug (MP et al.), and near Cape Race 7 Sep (DF). Despite this phenomenon the only other avocet was one at Memeon's Head, *Shelburne*, NS, 13–16 Aug (DY). Impressive concentrations of Hudsonian Godwits were 85 at Neguac, NB, 5 Aug (MD) and 69 at Miscou I., NB, 23 Aug (MD). Nova Scotia's 5th **Bar-tailed Godwit** was an adult thought to be of the Asian subspecies *baueri* at

The Hawk, C.S.I. 27 Sep–8 Oct (JN et al.). The season's report of Marbled Godwit was of one at Cap Bimet, NB, 9 Sep (DW). Highest counts of Semipalmated Sandpipers from traditional concentration sites in the Bay of Fundy were 20,000+ on 14 Aug at Windsor Causeway, NS (JWo), and 90,000 on 17 Aug at Mary's Pt., NB (DC). There were 4 Western Sandpipers in sw. NS between 4 Aug and 18 Sep (*vide* SF). A Western at Portugal Cove S., NF, 8–9 Sep was one of few for the province (PL). It was a good year for the more westerly sandpipers, with Regional totals of 21 Baird's, 25 Stilts, and 32 Buff-breasted. Juvenal-plumaged Curlew Sandpipers were identified at North Cape, PEI, 10 Sep (EMa) and Hartlen Pt., NS, 17–18 Oct (*vide* SF). Single Ruffs were at Malbaie North, Miscou I., NB, 9 Sep (MD) and Melbourne, Yarmouth, NS, 20 Sep (PG). The high total of 11 Long-billed Dowitchers was from New Brunswick in August, including 6 at Beausejour Marsh 9 Aug (WP). High counts of shorebirds from C.S.I., unlikely to be matched by any other location in the Region, were 3345 Sanderlings 18 Sep (*vide* SF), 800 Dunlins 27 Oct (MN), and 6715 Short-billed Dowitchers 5 Aug (*vide* SF). Perhaps under-reported, the only Wilson's Phalaropes were 5 in New Brunswick and one in Nova Scotia. Maximum counts of phalaropes from Old Proprietor Shoals, G.M.I., were 10,000 Red-neckeds 5 Aug and 250 Reds 21 Aug (LM).

Half of the 16 skuas seen in Newfoundland were identified as Greats, the latest 5 Nov at Cape Spear (BMT). Nova Scotia reported 2 skuas, both from Brier I., with one identified as a Great 16 Sep and one as a South Polar 7 Oct (*vide* BMy). New Brunswick reported single Great Skuas 17 Sep (LM) and 19 Sep (LM), and a South Polar Skua 29 Sep (ST), all from G.M.I. Long-tailed Jaegers are rare in the Bay of Fundy, so 4 reports off G.M.I. during Sep was significant (*vide* BD). Laughing Gulls by province were 2 in NB and one each in NS and NF. There were as many as 15 Little Gulls reported from coastal New Brunswick through the period; the only other report was of one at Watervale, *Antigonish*, NS, 12 Nov (*vide* BMy). The peak of 80 Black-headed Gulls in St. John's, NF, was near average, but included 2 adults that had been banded as chicks in Iceland (BMT). Five Common Gulls were noted, 4 at St. John's, NF: an ad. 4 Oct, a second-winter 7 Oct–15 Nov, an ad. 17 Nov, and a first-winter 29 Nov (BMT). Another first-winter was at Pointe-à-Boulea, NB, 14–18 Nov (RD). Lesser Black-backed Gulls numbers continue to surge. Twelve were reported in Nova Scotia, while in St. John's, NF, there were perhaps 25 individuals, including counts of 9 in

farm fields 16 Oct and 10 at the landfill 17 Nov (PL, BMT). Three Sabine's Gulls occurred around G.M.I., with an ad. 3 Sep (LB) and juvs. 14 Sep (ST et al.) and 22 Sep (DG). An early and southerly imm. Ivory Gull was at Bonavista, NF, 24 Nov (*vide* BMT). Less-than-annual in the Region, a Forster's Tern was at Pembroke Yarmouth, NS, 30 Nov (MN). A Black Tern was far e. at Mirande L., S.P.M., 22–28 Aug (RE).

Doves Through Warblers

An incredible 6 **White-winged Doves** were reported: one at White Head I., NB, 12 Sep (ST), one at Fredericton, NB, 13 Sep (BS), one at Alma, NB, 23–24 Oct (DR), one at Cape North, Victoria, NS, 2–8 Sep (*vide* IM), one at Sydney, NS, 7–15 Oct (CM et al.), and one at St. Pierre, S.P.M., 29–30 Sep (GC). Seven Snowy Owls in New Brunswick and one in Nova Scotia during the last half of Nov indicate a moderate flight. It was a relatively light northward movement of Red-bellied Woodpeckers, with all 4 reported in Nova Scotia in the last half of Nov (*vide* IM). A female Three-toed Woodpecker was considered unusual at Benjie's L., Cape Breton Highlands N.P., NS, 13 Aug (BMy). Only 8 Yellow-billed Cuckoos were reported for the entire Region, half in Newfoundland. A Say's Phoebe was at The Hawk, C.S.I., 23 Sep (JN et al.). A Great Crested Flycatcher at Bear Cove, NF, 20–22 Sep was a provincial rarity (TB et al.). Western Kingbird totals by province were 2 in NB, one at PEI, 4 in NS, and 3 in NF. Always an exciting find, single **Fork-tailed Flycatchers** were at Whale Cove, G.M.I., 30 Sep (ST et al.) and Economy, NS, 20 Oct (FS).

Nova Scotia had 3 White-eyed Vireos in s. coastal localities between 23 Sep and 13 Oct, while Newfoundland's 8th was at Blackhead 8 Oct (TB et al.). Most noteworthy of the 4 Yellow-throated Vireos reported was one at Blackhead 6 Oct (PL, BMT). Warbling Vireo totals were 9 in NS and 6 in NF. There was an intriguing report of a Cave Swallow at Seaforth, NS, 22 Nov. A late report of a displaced Purple Martin at Langlade, S.P.M., 24 Oct (MD) was, I hope, identified with other exotic species in mind. Both Carolina Wrens were in New Brunswick, one at Point La Nim 22 July–4 Aug, a first for n. NB (JC), and one at Fredericton 13 Oct (DG). Although probably under-reported, totals of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were 5 in NB, 11 in NS, and 5 in NF. Just 2 Northern Wheatears for the Region is a return to more normal numbers after several high autumn totals: one at Renewes, NF, 6–10 Sep (DP et al.) and one near Halifax, NS, 24 Oct (TP). A **Mountain Bluebird** at

Pennfield, NB, 24–25 Nov furnished the 2nd provincial record (KMa). Unlike recent autumns there was little sign of Bohemian Waxwings during the season.

It was good year for Blue-winged Warblers, with 11 seen between 23 Aug and 29 Sep, 2 in NB, 7 in NS, and 2 in NF. Consistently rare over the years, Golden-winged Warblers included individuals at Schooner Pond, C.B.I., 17 Sep (CM), The Hole, C.S.I., 29 Sep (SF et al.), and Blackhead, NF, 8–12 Oct (TB et al.). A male Brewster's Warbler was reported at Church Pt., Digby, NS, 1 Sep (RT). A late Chestnut-sided Warbler was killed by a cat 30 Nov at Kentville, NS (*vide* KM). Both Yellow-throated Warblers were at the easternmost point of land in the Region, Cape Spear, NF, 19 Sep (DP) and 11–12 Oct (DB et al.). Prairie Warblers were almost too numerous to track. Totals reported by province were 2 in NB, 20 in NS, and 8 in NF. Single Prothonotary Warblers were at The Hawk, C.S.I., NS, 1 Sep (BMy), on a fishing boat on Georges Bank, NS, late Sep (*vide* KM), and at Blackhead, NF, 22 Sep (DB). The first Kentucky Warbler for S.P.M. was, unfortunately, captured by a cat at St. Pierre 26 Sep (LJ); Nova Scotia had 2, one banded on Bon Portage I. 4 Sep (*vide* KM) and one at White's L. 4 Oct (PM). A Connecticut Warbler was reported at Whale Cove, G.M.I., 12 Oct (KT). The Region's first **MacGillivray's Warbler** was well-observed and photographed at Halifax, NS, 20 Nov–4 Dec (ED et al.). The date fits with other records of this species from the Atlantic Coast of North America. Nova Scotia and Newfoundland had 3 Hooded Warblers each, all in Sep, except for one on an oil rig 100 mi se. of St. John's, NF, 30 Aug (*vide* PL).

Tanagers Through Finches

The only Summer Tanager was at Church Pt., Digby, NS, in early Oct (MN, RT). An Eastern Towhee was at Woody Pt., NF, where rare, 30 Oct (HM). Clay-colored Sparrow totals were near average: 2 in NB, 8 in NS, and 3 in NF. Average numbers of Lark Sparrow were encountered 25 Aug–12 Oct, with 2 in NB, 7 in NS, and 2 in NF. The only Grasshopper Sparrows were one at Cape Spear, NF, 19 Sep (DP) and singles at Halifax, NS (CS), and C.S.I. (MN), both in mid-Oct. New Brunswick's 5th **Harris's Sparrow** was at White Head I. 20 Oct (PP). There were 5 Blue Grosbeaks 25 Sep–22 Oct, 3 in NB and 2 in NS. Twenty-nine Dickcissel across the Region represented a typical autumn total. Three Yellow-headed Blackbirds were slightly below-average, with one at C.S.I. 4 Sep (MN), one at Apple R., NS, 16 Nov (KFS), and one at Miquelon,

Québec

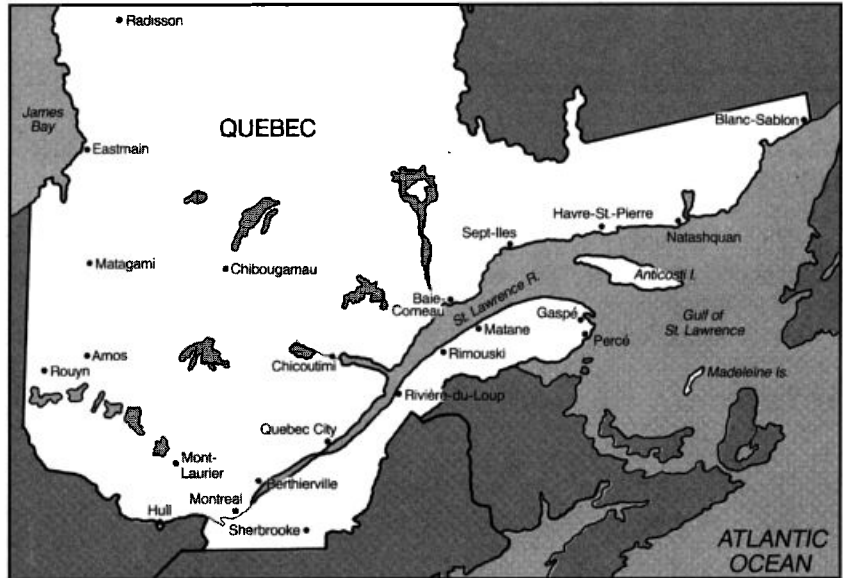
S.P.M., 20–22 Sep (RE). A Western Meadowlark at Inkerman, NB, 5–10 Oct was the 6th for the province (RR et al.). Iron-clad records of **Bullock's Oriole** are scarce in the Region; happily, an imm. male in Halifax, NS, 30 Nov+ was such a record (IM et al.). White-winged Crossbills were locally abundant in Nova Scotia in early autumn, but declined in Oct. Purple Finches were widespread in Nova Scotia; finches were otherwise generally low in numbers across the Region.

Addendum

An imm. male **Bronzed Cowbird** picked up freshly dead in Dartmouth, NS, 8 Jul (specimen preserved; full details to appear elsewhere) represented the first substantiated record for Canada and adds some plausibility to 2 other sight records from Nova Scotia (S. Harvey, IM).

Observers (subregional editors in boldface):

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Few rarities of note embellished the fall season. Shorebirds and gulls, in particular, were meager in number and diversity. Counts of gulls were astonishingly low in the Montréal region. Only a few hundred large gulls were tallied at the Beauharnois dam, a site visited by at least 10,000 of these birds in November throughout the 1970s and the 1980s. Likewise, numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls on the Richelieu River were remarkably low. On the other hand, the Snow Goose and its diminutive, Ross's Goose, continued to flourish and were turning

up in new localities. A nice collection of locally rare warblers was noticed late in the season. By mid-October, most northern owls were showing some signs of a massive southern movement. This was particularly noteworthy for the Northern Hawk Owl throughout November. Great Gray and Boreal Owls also appeared south of their summer range later in the period. A better account should be available in the Winter Report for the last two species. The weather was generally cool and dry, with a slight increase in precipitation in November.

Loons Through Cranes

Although Pacific Loons are known to nest regularly in coastal regions of Hudson Bay, most probably migrate west and few fully documented records are known for the s. part of the Region. This fall, the only well-described individual was recorded at Lévis 31 Oct (GL). Rare in the St. Lawrence estuary, single Sooty Shearwaters were spotted from the Trois-Pistoles-Les Escoumins ferry 26 Aug (G Gendron et al.) and from the Rimouski-Forestville ferry 7 Sep (R. Saint-Laurent et al.) An American White Pelican graced Île Saint-Ours, at Contrecoeur, 26 Sep (A. Boucher, *vide* A. Desrosiers). An exceptional count of 70 Great Egrets was made in late Aug at Saint-Timothée, where the species has been increasing dramatically since 1998 (ES, AL, m.ob.) There were no unusual heron and egret

