



**Pierre Bannon | Olivier Barden
Normand David | Samuel Denault
Yves Aubry**

It was one of the warmest springs ever recorded in Québec. All regions experienced above-normal temperatures, northern Québec being 5° C above and southern Québec 2–3° C above normal. The northern part experienced precipitation levels 40 percent above normal or more. In the south, precipitation was closer to normal, although May was very wet. Ducks and geese put on a spectacular show along the Richelieu River in March. Out-of-range gulls stirred a lot of excitement, but shorebirds were almost absent, except for the phalaropes. Passerines migration was lackluster, with no significant fallout reported anywhere in the Region.

WATERFOWL THROUGH HERONS

An ad. Pink-footed Goose was a notable find at Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu 25 Mar, providing a 9th record for the province and a new Regional record-early date (GZ, PB, A. Messier, ph.). The same individual was spotted later the same day at nearby Saint-Basile-le-Grand (OB, MR, SD). A flock of 29 Greater White-fronted Geese, by far the largest ever reported in the Region, was observed flying over L. Abitibi, near Clerval 28 Apr (JS. Plante). Adding to this intriguing report, the Abitibi region had hosted a group of 15 at Authier-Nord in spring 2005 (J. Gagnon, JS. Plante, vt.). Brant were seen in larger numbers than usual in the Montréal area during a prolonged period of wet weather in mid-May, e.g., several hundred in a flooded field at Saint-Clet 20 May (W. Grubert). A Barnacle Goose stopped at Masson 5 May (JFJ, LJ). Tundra Swans made a very good incursion in extreme s. Québec in Mar: 2 were spotted at Sainte-Barbe 11 & 27 Mar (PÉ, S. Rochon), 7

at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 16-17 Mar, with 2 remaining until 24 Mar (MG et al.), 2 at Saint-Blaise 16-24 Mar (Y. Paquette, L. Simard, L. Gagné), 3 at Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka 18 Mar (B. Barnhurst), and 2 at Saint-Anicet 29-31 Mar (PÉ, m.ob.). Five unidentified swans near Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 12 Mar were probably this species (M. & C. Arnaudin).

Two male Eurasian Wigeons at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 18 Mar (D. Paquette, D. Ouellette) and 2 male Northern Shovelers in the same locality 12 Mar provided a Regional record-early date for both species (E. Samson, A. Lacasse). Single Eurasian Teal were at Noyan 25 Mar (PB, GZ), Portneuf 1 Apr (G. Cyr), Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures 10 Apr (CN), Rimouski 27 Apr (GG), La Pocatière 7 May (CA, CG), and Sept-Îles 7 May (CC, BD). A male Tufted Duck brightened Lévis 20-22 May (G. Lemelin, LR, A. Déry, ph.).

Two Gray Partridges at Cacouna 18 Mar (D. Bérubé) and 2 other at Pointe-au-Père 25 Mar (G. Proulx, M. Therriault) were well e. of their range. A Wild Turkey at Armstrong, Beauce 16 May confirmed a modest eastward range extension (SD, N. Hamel). Single American White Pelicans were noteworthy at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 21 May (R. Saint-Jean et al., *vide* MG) and at Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon 29 May+ (O. Mongeon, LR, m.ob., ph.). Stray herons and egrets from the s. included a Snowy Egret at Saint-Siméon 22-27 May (M. Bujold, m.ob.), a Little Blue Heron at l'Anse-au-Griffon 27-28 May (G. Gélinas, O. Deruelle et al.), single Tricolored Herons at Montmagny 30 Apr–5 May (H. Nadeau, G. Cameron, Y. Hamel) and La Baie 28-30 May (S. Tremblay, R. Gagnon et al.), and a Cattle Egret at Ile Dupas 22 May (P. Franche, A. Gosselin). Single Glossy Ibis made an appearance at Baie-du-Febvre 11 Apr (L. Corriveau, S. Bouchard, D. Sainte-Marie) and again 21 Apr–7 May (J. Cadieux, P. Brassard et al.) and then at Montmagny 1 May (S. Bégin, L. Plante), while the same observers reported a *Plegadis* at Rivière-Ouelle 1 May.

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

An ad. Red-tailed Hawk of the *calurus* subspecies that successfully wintered at Gatineau for the 3rd consecutive year was still present 6 Apr (C. Blanchette, F. Leduc). An imm gray-morph Gyrfalcon was late at Saint-Basile-le-Grand 22 May (R. Belhumeur). A Common Moorhen at Chandler 22 May represented the 3rd record only for the Gaspé Pen. (M. Larrivée). A Black-bellied Plover at Cap-Rouge 23-26 Mar provided a record-early date for the Region (P. Nadeau). An American Avocet was a good find at Cap-Tourmente 5 May (L. Major, PM. Marotte), while one at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré 12 May (MR) was found dead the next day. A Greater Yellowlegs in the Magdalen Is. 23 Mar was extremely early (DGG). Willets made a good showing outside their limited breeding range in the Magdalen Is. Singles were at Gaspé 20-28 May (D. Jalbert) and Lévis 22 May (CN), while up to 2 showed on Ile Verte 28-31 May (Y. Gauthier et al., R. Gaudreault, F. L'Heureux). The only Marbled Godwit of the spring turned up at La Pocatière 20-27 May (CA, CG). Also a rare spring visitor, a Stilt Sandpiper at Baie-du-Febvre 15-23 Apr provided a record-early date for the Region (F. Gariépy et al.).

A total of 5 Laughing Gulls was more than usual: single ads. were at Victoriaville 13 Apr, a record-early date (CR, M. Grégoire, J. Ducharme), Paspébiac 22-23 Apr (A. Couture), Rivière-Ouelle 14 May (CG, CA) Neuville 22 May (G. Lord, N. Boucher, JB) and Havre-aux-Basques 28-29 May (A. Richard, DGG). Franklin's Gulls were represented by an ad. at Victoriaville 21 Apr (CR et al.), an ad. at Métabetchouan 7 May (C. Cormier, GS), an ad. at La Malbaie 27 May, and a first-year bird in the same locale 28-31 May (A. Côté). Fairly good numbers of Little Gulls were also reported. Bonaparte's Gulls totaled 4000 at Bergeronnes 7 May (R. Pintiaux). Intriguing were 3 different Thayer's-type Gulls that were nicely photographed at La Malbaie 23 Apr, 21 May, and 30-31 May, re-

SA An unprecedented fallout of Red Phalaropes occurred in mid-May. Most birds appeared inland w. of Québec City, with several along the Richelieu R. valley, e. of Montréal. Two males and a female were first discovered at Baie-du-Febvre 13 May (DD, JP. Richard), followed by a male at Saint-Blaise 13-15 May (S. Mathieu et al., ph.), a female at Napierville 14 May (SD, P. Laporte, ph.), a female at Sainte-Catherine-de-Hatley 14 May (JP. Pelletier, ph.), a female at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 14-15 May (which fell prey to a Peregrine Falcon; SD, PB, m.ob., ph.), a female at Lac-Etchemin 16 May (M. Labrie), one at Chambly 16 May (R. Chartier), and finally a female at Québec City 18-19 May (JL). There are only four Regional records of the species in the month of May, 1960–2005. This fallout was weather-related and probably attributable to an intense low-pressure system that moved nw. from the Atlantic through Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and s. Québec. Rain fell almost daily in s. Québec 12-21 May, causing major flooding 19-20 May e. of the Richelieu R. valley. Not as rare, Red-necked Phalaropes were also widely reported during the same period.



One of three adult Thayer's Gulls to show up in the Charlevoix area during May 2006, this individual was photographed 21 May at La Malbaie. Photograph by Alain Côté.

spectively (A. Côté). All birds were ads. and showed typical features for this species. Two Ross's Gulls, an ad. and a first-summer bird, were discovered at Sept-Iles 28-29 May (JFL, BD, CC), providing the 4th fully documented record for the Region and the first of 2 birds. Providing the 2nd and 3rd records for this year, an imm. Ivory Gull was photographed at Alma 31 Mar (S. Boivin), while an ad. was thoroughly described at Lévis 25 Mar (JL). A Caspian Tern at L. Osisko, Rouyn-Noranda 25-26 May furnished the 2nd record for Abitibi (M. Arsenault et al.).

CUCKOOS THROUGH THRASHERS

The only Yellow-billed Cuckoo was reported in Gatineau Park 29 May (LJ, JF). The Black-billed Cuckoo at Magpie 16 May was the easternmost ever seen on the North Shore (J. Lanthier, *vide* YR). A fledgling Eastern Screech-Owl was seen on a Montréal lawn 8 Apr (J. Harrison), a surprisingly early date for the Region. Snowy Owls continued to be locally numerous into Mar, with 15 at Saint-Clet 8 Mar (M. Dennis), an excellent figure for the Montréal vicinity. A research project in Abitibi on *Aegolius* owls yielded 18 nest boxes used by Northern Saw-whet Owl pairs and four by Boreal Owls (J. Gagnon et al.).

Single Red-bellied Woodpeckers were at Sainte-Foy 22 May (P. Caron) and Tewkesbury 26 May (J. Guay), while one present at Saint-Godefroi since last fall was still there 25 May (E. Arsenault). The spread of Common Raven into the St. Lawrence lowlands has been obvious for over a decade, but information about breeding pairs at the edge of their range is still patchy, so the discovery of at least four nests at Laval this season was remarkable (*vide* G. Lachaine). A Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Bécancour 11 Apr tied the earliest Regional record (ph. RB).

The relative mildness of last winter and light snow cover seem to have set the ground for an increase in Carolina Wren numbers. They were widely reported this spring, and breeding was confirmed in May at three localities in s. Québec: Repentigny (G. Santiago), Saint-Blaise (PB), and Philipsburg (PB). The Townsend's Solitaire at Beauport was last reported 13 Mar (JM. Giroux). A Wood Thrush at Pointe-des-Prairies Park, Montréal 18 Apr antedated the Region-wide early date by two days (J. Gawloski). The Varied Thrush dis-

covered at Grande-Rivière last Jan was last reported 14 Apr (R. Lemieux, *vide* D. Mercier), while a male was at Québec City 8-9 Apr (JB, N. Boucher). The Brown Thrasher present since last Dec at Val d'Or was seen until 12 Apr (C. Siano, R. Ladurantaye), whereas one in Maria was last seen 21 Apr (C. Lamarre), confirming rare but increasing cases of successful overwintering in the Region. Another Brown Thrasher at McWatters, Abitibi 9 Apr was quite early, in addition to being out of range (D. Guilbault, M. Letendre).

WARBLERS THROUGH ORIOLES

Up to 2 Blue-winged Warblers were present on their breeding grounds at Lac-Brome in May (PB et al.), while another was at Freighsburg 21 May (MR, P. Lane). A Lawrence's



This female Red Phalarope at Napierville, near Montréal, on 14 May was one of about 10 grounded by stormy weather in southern Québec in mid-May 2006. Photograph by Samuel Denault.

Warbler returned to Lac-Brome for the 3rd consecutive year (PB et al., ph.). A few record-early arrival dates among the warblers were broken or tied this spring: a Pine Warbler at Gatineau Park 2 Apr tied an old record from 1983 (D. Saint-Hilaire); a Black-and-

white Warbler at Cowansville 3 Apr bested the previous record by two days (JP. Santerre); and the returning Louisiana Waterthrush at Gatineau Park tied the earliest Regional record, first detected 2 May this year (E. Suárez, P. Matthews). Always a rare occurrence throughout the Region on migration, a Connecticut Warbler in Mount-Royal Park 26 May was the only one reported away from the breeding grounds (DD). A territorial Yellow-breasted Chat at Neuville 26 May+ delighted numerous observers (JB, ph.).

A female Western Tanager was at Cap-Tourmente 7 May (G. Lachance, G. L'Heureux, ph.), prolonging the Region's lucky streak of spring records of this species to eight consecutive years. The Spotted Towhee at Les Escoumins was last reported 18 Apr (JG. Beaulieu). A maximum of 9 Clay-colored Sparrows at Guigues, *Témiscamingue* 15 May was noteworthy (J. Fréchette). Far less frequent in s. Québec than in the e. half of the province, a Lark Sparrow at Danville was an interesting find 24-27 Apr (G. Huot, D. Labonté). A Grasshopper Sparrow at Saint-Marc-sur-Richelieu 17 May+ established a new site for this rare, Regionally threatened species (S. Rioux, ph.). Ten Lapland Longspurs at Baie-du-Febvre (D. Lavoie) and one at Saint-Basile-le-Grand (SD) 20 May were late for s. Québec, while a figure of 500 at Métabetchouan, *Lac-Saint-Jean* 29 Apr (JP. Bérubé et al.) was impressive; such concentrations are unknown in the vast agricultural landscape of the St. Lawrence lowlands farther s. but may be of annual occurrence in the Lac-Saint-Jean plain as well as in Abitibi.

A male Lazuli Bunting was photographed at feeders in Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Montréal 14 May (P. Patrick, E. Cowan), providing a first fully documented record for the Region. Singing Western Meadowlarks were reported from Cap-Tourmente 6 May (L. Messely, ph.) and Mont-Joli 27 May (*vide* S. Rhéaume), the latter being correctly identified a few days after its discovery (GG, D. Ruest). A female Yellow-headed Blackbird was at Baie-du-Febvre 16-25 May (RB, M. Berlinguette, and M.

Maheu). A singing Orchard Oriole was at Freighsburg 20 May (JG. Papineau, H. Jetten), not far from where the species nested in 2002.

Exotics: A Black Swan harassing a Canada Goose was videotaped at Dundee 22 May (J.



For the third consecutive year, a male Lawrence's Warbler occupied a territory in May 2006 and later (here 15 June) at Lac-Brome, Knowlton, Québec. Photograph by Pierre Bannon.

Brisson). A Saffron Finch attended a feeder at Saint-Ambroise, Saguenay 8-19 May (ph. G. Tremblay)

Addendum: A Tufted Titmouse at L'Anse-à-Beaufils 20 Jan 2006 provided the 2nd record for the Gaspé Pen (R. Côté).

Contributors (subregional editors in boldface): C. Auchu, P. Bannon (Montréal), R. Barbeau, J. Bernier, C. Couture, D. Demers, B. Duchesne, P. Éthier, R. Fortin (Lower-St. Lawrence), DG. Gaudet (Magdalen Is.), G. Gendron, C. Girard, L. Imbeau

(Abitibi), JF. Jetté, L. Jolicoeur, J. Lachance (Québec City), JF. Laporte, C. Nadeau, P. Poulin (Gaspésie), M. Raymond, Y. Rochepault (North Shore), C. Roy (Bois-Francis), L. Roy, R. Saint-Laurent (Lower-St. Lawrence), G. Savard (Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean), D. Toussaint (Outaouais), G. Zenaitis. ☪

Pierre Bannon, 1517 Leprohon, Montréal, Québec H4E 1P1, (pbannon@videotron.ca);

Olivier Barden, 1652 rue de Bruyères, Sainte-Foy, Québec G1W 3H1, (whitephasegyrfalcon@hotmail.com);

Normand David, 347 Donegani, Pointe-Claire, Québec H9R 5M4, (normanddavid@videotron.ca);

Samuel Denault, 75 Beauchemin, Saint-Basile-le-Grand, Québec J3N 1J6, (samuel.denault@videotron.ca);

Yves Aubry, Canadian Wildlife Service, P. O. Box 10100, Sainte-Foy, Québec G1V 4H5, (yves.aubry@ec.gc.ca)

New England



Simon Perkins

The contrast in weather between March/April and May was stark. The first two months were very dry, with March in Massachusetts ranking as the third driest in 112 years of records. Then came May—which in Massachusetts ranked as the second wettest ever! Virtually all of the rain came courtesy of a series of coastal storms that bore an uncanny resemblance to the series of storms in spring 2005. To quote the great Yogi Berra: "It's déjà vu all over again." The rain peaked with a four-day barrage in the middle of the month that produced a staggering 54 cm in certain communities in northeastern Massachusetts. Predictably, record flooding occurred across wide areas in

northeastern Massachusetts, eastern New Hampshire, and southeastern Maine. Governors declared states of emergency, the National Guard was deployed to assist local residents, and entire towns were evacuated.

However, the water appeared to affect humans more than most birds. Last year's storms had more significant impacts on nesting species because the brunt of the weather came later in the month, when nesting was well underway. The birds that took the hardest hits were seabirds, many of which were cast against the coast and beyond by the incessant easterly gales. Indeed the break between systems during the middle week of May was so brief that the series of storms is referred to below simply as the Storm. With one striking, localized exception (on 5 May, prior to the onset of heavy weather), May migrants had no choice but to "pick their spots" and move during the few breaks in the weather: land-bird migration was thus very slow indeed. Shorebirds, on the other hand, were conspicuous, rarities plentiful, and early arrivals prevalent—all over again.

Abbreviations: Monomoy (Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, MA); M.V. (Martha's Vineyard, Dukes, MA); Monhegan I. (Lincoln, ME); P.I. (Plum I., Essex, MA, including Parker River N.W.R.); Quabbin (Quabbin Res., cen. MA).

WATERFOWL THROUGH FRIGATEBIRD

Eight Tundra Swans reported Regionwide in-

cluded 6 in Massachusetts and 2 in Rhode Island. The Region's 9 Greater White-fronted Geese, a total that has become more or less



This male Black-necked Stilt, one of two in New England this spring, delighted birders during its eight-day stay in East Boston, Massachusetts 1-8 (here 3) April 2006. Photograph by John Crook.

expected in recent years, included 4 each in Massachusetts and Connecticut and one in n. Maine at Fort Fairfield 2 Apr (ph. BS). A Cackling Goose discovered on the Plymouth, MA C.B.C. remained there at least through 21 Mar (TLE et al.), and 2 were reported from Connecticut, both also in Mar (fide GH). In Connecticut, a Barnacle Goose visited Southbury 15-28 Mar (C. Harrison). Seven