

atlantic provinces region



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It was a warmer and drier summer than average across the Region. Despite the mundane weather, exciting birds were found: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Black-necked Stilt, Bar-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Gull, Gull-billed Tern, White-winged Dove, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and Violet-green Swallow. White-winged Crossbills poured into Nova Scotia, taking advantage of a heavy cone crop, and began a breeding frenzy.

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

LOONS TO CRANES

Two pairs of Red-throated Loons at the usual nesting site on Miquelon, SPM, produced just one young (RE, BL). Fifty Red-throated Loons were still in migration at GMI, NB, June 9 (JWi), while 15 at Campobello I., NB, July 28 were over-summering sub-adults (PLe). Again a Pied-billed Grebe was in good nesting habitat in the Codroy Valley, NF, June 6; the first provincial breeding record remains to be proven (KK et al.). Unseasonable grebes in Nova Scotia were a Horned in Halifax harbor July 23 (JWo) and a Red-necked at Tor Bay July 10 (SF). Twenty-thousand shearwaters, more Sootys than Greaters, were feeding on caplin close

to shore near Portugal Cove S. July 6 (BMt, JWe). One-hundred fifty Manx Shearwaters were seen from the St. Pierre ferry July 13 (RE). The Bay of Fundy waters, Grand Manan I., NB, hold the largest concentration of Wilson's Storm-Petrels in the Region, with a high of 2500 noted there June 14 (PW).

Four Great Egret reports were shared by 3 provinces. Oddly, the only Snowy Egrets reported consisted of a rather high total of five from Newfoundland. A very high total of 15 Little Blue Herons reported Regionwide included 10 from Nova Scotia, mostly immatures in late July. Tricolored Herons were one far east at Louisbourg, NS, June 4 (JMe) and one at Castalia Marsh, GMI, NB, June 14-18 (KE). An extraordinary wave of immature Yellow-crowned Night-Herons involved five at Sable I., NS, July 27-28 (ZL) and one at St. John's, NE, July 22 (PL et al.).

A **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** joined wild Am. Black Ducks to feed on corn handouts at Church Pt., Digby, NS, in late April. It remained through the period. The genuine wildness cannot be underestimated, given the recent vagrancy reputation of the species and the bird's wariness when it first appeared (m.ob.). Out-of-range Wood Ducks were five June 17 at St. Andrews, NF (DP), and a female June 12 at Goose Bay, Lab. (BMt). A Gadwall near Nain, Lab., June 13 was one of the few records for Labrador (BMt). Male Eur. Wigeons were found at Port Bickerton, NB, June 28 (HW) and at French R., PEI, in early July (CS).

Most unusual for midsummer was a

SA The unprecedented spring influx of N. Shovelers into the extreme of the Region continued into June, with several breeding records resulting. Among the numerous sightings was a belated report of 5 pairs at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, NF, in late May and at least 7 pairs in Goose Bay, Lab., in early June (BMt). In Newfoundland, a brood was found at St. Paul's Inlet (ST) and a distressed female feigning an injury was at Parson's Pond (JMa). St. Pierre et Miquelon had its first breeding records with 2 broods on Miquelon (*vide* RE). Three pairs at Nail Pd., PEI, June 27, were probably part of the influx (BD).

drake Tufted Duck paired with a female Greater Scaup at Louisbourg, NS, June 16 (DMq, SM). Since the confirmation of breeding Harlequin Ducks in n. New Brunswick in 1995, there has been a special effort to find more breeding evidence. In 1998 3 broods were found: 2 at the mouth of the Charlo R. July 5 (JC) and one at the mouth of nearby Benjamin R. July 19 (ML). A brood of Harlequins on the Bay du Nord R., NF, June 27 provided a new s. limit for that province (GS). A male Ruddy Duck was an unexpected addition to the New Minas, NS, sewage lagoon waterfowl assemblage June 12-24 (JWo).

The largest concentration of Turkey Vultures reported were seven July 21 at Nictaux, Annapolis, NS (GA), and nine July 16 coming to a roost at Glenmount, Kings, NS (*vide* JT). Northern Harrier is a scarce and local summer resident in s. Labrador. First breeding evidence was a nest with a newly hatched chick and 2 eggs beside the runway at the Churchill Falls airport July 10 (BMt, KO). Small rodents were at the high end of the population cycle across Labrador, resulting in numerous Rough-legged Hawk nests (BMt).

Golfers discovered an ad. **Purple Gallinule** at Hartlen Pt., NS, July 19-25 (*vide* Jwa). Single Sandhill Cranes were at St. John's, NE, June 22 (JS) and Sussex, NB, July 13-16 (*vide* JCa).

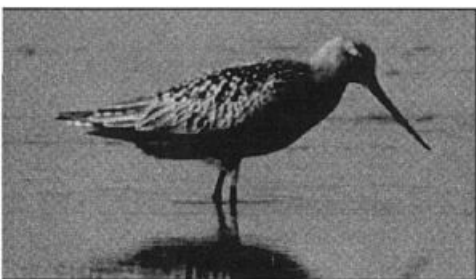
SHOREBIRDS TO WOODPECKERS

A June 28 Am. Golden-Plover at Cape Sable I., NS, was one of the very few June records ever in the Region (MN). **American Oystercatchers** nested unsuccessfully at Cape Sable I., NS, site of last year's first Canadian breeding, but the pair remained throughout the season. Away from Cape Sable I., an Am. Oystercatcher at Redhead, Digby Neck, NS, was an extraordinary find by 2 cyclists on June 17 (*vide* SF). A female **Black-necked Stilt** was photographed in a drained lobster pound in Lower W. Pubnico, NS, June 28 for the 5th provincial record (JD et al.). A Willet was well east of the breeding range at Renew's, NF, June 5 (TS). A **Bar-tailed Godwit** was photographed at Cherry Hill, NS, June 8-13 (SF et al.). The largest counts of Semipalmated Sandpiper were 70,000 at Evangeline Beach, NS, July 25 and 25,000 at the Windsor, NS, causeway July 30 (JT et al.). Single Stilt

Sandpipers were at Cape Sable I., NS, July 16 (IM, EM); Blue Rocks and South Bar, NS, July 19 (FL, DMq), and Renewes, NE, July 31 (PL). Single Ruffs were at Sackville, NB, waterfowl park July 10 (RB) and Three Fathom Hbr., NS, July 12 (BS, PM). Early returning migrants were two Semipalmated and two White-rumped sandpipers June 27 at Renewes, NF (PL, BMT); 40 Whimbrel June 30 at Miquelon, SPM (RE); 300 Short-billed Dowitchers July 5 at Cape Sable I., NS (MN) and 3200 Red-necked Phalaropes July 8 at Grand Manan Basin, NB (LM). A juv Wilson's Phalarope ventured out to Sable I., NS, on July 31 (ZL).

The only skua report was one identified as a Great Skua June 19 off Miquelon, SPM (DD). Most interesting of the dozen Laughing Gulls seen across s. coastlines of the Region were five on Sable I., NS, in July (ZL). Little Gulls included an adult July 20 at Bathurst, NB (PD), and single first-summer plumaged birds July 9 at Englishtown, NS (DMq, DMr), and June 26–28 at Mirande L., SPM (RE, JH). Eight newly flying juv. and five ad. Black-headed Gulls at Stephenville Crossing July 27 represented the best successful reproduction there in years (BMT). Three juvenile Black-headed Gulls with several adults at a Ring-billed Gull colony in Spaniard's Bay, NE, was the first breeding evidence for the Avalon Pen. (AH, PL1). The ad. **Black-tailed Gull**, appearing for the 2nd consecutive year on Sable I., NS, was present late April to at least the end of July (ZL). Fewer than five Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported Regionwide.

A **Gull-billed Tern** was identified at Cherry Hill Beach, NS, June 29–30 (SF). An impressive 35 pairs of Roseate Terns are now nesting on an island near W. Pubnico, NS (*vide* BMy). A **Forster's Tern** was most unusual in spring, and even more so for being inland at Youngs Cove, Grand L., NB, June 10 (FH). An intensive survey of Black



Showing its characteristic short-billed and short-legged profile was this alternate plumaged Bar-tailed Godwit of the European subspecies *lapponica* at Cherry Hill Beach, Nova Scotia, on June 9, 1998, the fifth for the province. Photograph/Ian McLaren

Terns in New Brunswick turned up 109 breeding pairs, 84 in the lower Saint John R. (*vide* BD). A few sub-ad. Thick-billed Murres were seen off Deer I. and Campobello I., NB, in late July and early August (PLe, ST).

White-winged Dove is such a long distance vagrant to the Region that it has to remain boldfaced, despite its annual summer occurrence. This year there was one at Louisbourg, NS, June 1–6 (*vide* BMy) and Tracadie, NB, July 16 (NB). A rare spring Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Barrington, NS, June 7 provided one of few records for that month in the Region (MN). Common Nighthawk appears to be well established in the north at Goose Bay, Lab., where up to four were seen on several evenings in June and July (BMT). The Red-headed Woodpecker at Langlade, SPM, May 28–June 11 furnished a rare Regional spring record and one of the few this far east at any season (LJ).

FLYCATCHERS TO WARBLERS

One of the Region's many curiosities is why New Brunswick has had more **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** than the rest of the provinces combined. This season there was one at Pt. Lepeau, NB, June 18–19 (JH). Eastern Wood-Pewees e. of the Nova Scotia breeding range were different birds at St. Pierre, SPM, June 8 & 11 (RE). Late migrant flycatchers from Sable I., NS, included an E. Wood-Pewee June 19 and an Olive-sided Flycatcher June 21 (ZL). Eastern Kingbirds were noticed where they do not breed on GMI, NB, Saint Pierre et Miquelon (seven), and at several Newfoundland locations in early June (m.ob.). An E. Phoebe in the Codroy Valley, NF, June 6 was about the 5th for the province (KK, AH).

A **Violet-green Swallow** observed for several hours feeding over a pond at Bancroft Pt., GMI, NB, June 7 was a provincial first and one of the very few ever in the Region (BD). A pair of N. Rough-winged Swallows frequented a hole on a rock cut near Fredericton during June. July 27 was a surprising date for a stray House Wren at Langlade, SPM (MD). Rare summer Blue-gray Gnatcatchers included one June 13 at L. Echo, NS (TBe), and one June 28 at Mary's Pt., NB (DC). A wandering N. Mockingbird ended up in the far north at Wabush, Lab., June 17 (CD). For the 3rd consecutive year Bohemian Waxwings were found at several locations in the remote boreal forest of c. Labrador during July (BMT).

Singing well n. of their respective breeding ranges were male Cape May Warblers at

Goose Bay, Lab., June 11–17 & 24, and a Bay-breasted Warbler 120 mi s.e. of Goose Bay June 20 (BMT). A singing male Palm Warbler in Goose Bay and two singing males farther east at Cartwright, Lab., were of the western subspecies *palmarum* (BMT). A singing male **Prairie Warbler** inland at Kejimikujik N.P., NS, June 6 was probably the first of this routine autumn vagrant to be heard singing in the Region (CSa). A Prothonotary Warbler made an early "autumn" showing at Sable I., NS, July 25–27 (ZL).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

An encouraging 20 pairs of N. Cardinals were estimated breeding on GMI, NB (BD), and there were at least seven singing males in Halifax, NS, during June. A late spring Blue Grosbeak was at Baccaro Pt., NS, June 7 (MN), and late Indigo Buntings were at Traytown, NE, June 8 (GS) and Sable I., NS, June 1–3 (ZL). Rare spring Yellow-headed Blackbirds were in Nova Scotia at Port Clyde June 6 (MN) and Avonport June 14–15 (*vide* JWo). A first-summer Orchard Oriole sang at Hampton, NB, June 7 (JWi). An estimated 150 pairs of House Finches were breeding in Moncton, NB (BD). White-winged Crossbills swarmed Nova Scotia. They were singing in great abundance around the province, taking advantage of the heavy cone crop. They were also breeding commonly in w. Newfoundland and parts of New Brunswick.

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