

## *Articles*

### **First Breeding and Nest Record of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario**

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#### **Introduction**

The Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) is a striking black and white, medium-sized shorebird with extraordinarily long, pink legs. Stilts are common in shallow wetlands, salt ponds and sewage lagoons, feeding on invertebrates and small fish. In North America, they regularly breed in scattered populations: throughout southern Florida and locally along the Atlantic coast as far north as Delaware Bay and southeastern Pennsylvania; in coastal and inland freshwater sites along the Gulf of Mexico from Alabama to extreme southern Texas (and inland to the Edwards Plateau), through the northwest and panhandle of Texas (and very locally in central Texas) and much of eastern New Mexico; locally in central and eastern Colorado as well as very locally in central Kansas; along the southern Pacific coast of California and inland in central California west of the Sierra Nevada; and widely in the Great Basin, from southern Oregon east of the Cascades, through north-eastern California east of the Sierra

Nevada, northern Nevada, through to southwestern Idaho, northern Utah and extreme southwestern Wyoming. They also breed locally in east-central Washington, west-central Montana, along the lower Colorado River and the Salton Sea, and southeastern Arizona. During a recent range expansion, they have begun to nest extraliminally in North Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Tennessee, Kentucky, Wisconsin and Michigan. Black-necked Stilts have a tendency to range widely and extralimital sightings are common after storms or during prolonged droughts in their regular breeding areas (Robinson et al. 1999).

In Canada, they are described as a rare and erratic breeder in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan and are considered accidental or irregular vagrants throughout the rest of the country, with records in all ten provinces (Godfrey 1986, Campbell et al. 1990, Gauthier and Aubry 1996, Leighton et al. 2002, Manitoba Avian Research Committee 2003). Breeding records in Alberta (Dekker et al. 1979) and Saskatchewan (Salisbury and

Salisbury 1989, Smith 1996) have occurred since 1977 and are usually associated with droughts in the western United States. One of the earliest breeding records in Canada is an unconfirmed record of a set of eggs in the National Museum of Canada collected by Edward Arnold from Fort Qu'appelle, Saskatchewan on 13 June 1894, a year of widespread drought in the western United States. (Godfrey 1966, Smith 1996).

There have been 13 occurrences of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario (Table 1), but until recently there has never been any indication of local breeding. However, recent droughts in western North America coupled with increasingly regular sightings of this species in and around the Great Lakes Basin, including recently documented nests in Wisconsin and Michigan (Table 2), have made any provincial sightings in 2004 of particular interest.

**Table 1: Chronology of occurrences of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario.**

- 1) 1 September 1955: one, Frederick House Lake, *Cochrane* (Frances Bourne, Rita Seccombe). Reference: Baillie (1955) postulated that this first record for Ontario likely occurred as a result of the passage of Hurricane Connie in mid August.
- 2) 14 October 1979: one, Smithville sewage lagoons, *Niagara* (Gerald Chapple, Gary A. Novosel, Aline Novosel). References: Goodwin 1981, Wormington 1986.
- 3) 7 June 1981: two, Sable Island, *Rainy River* (Evan J. Thomas, M.B. Thomas). Reference: James 1983.
- 4) 28 May – 16 June 1989: one male, Stoney Point, *Essex* (Richard A. Girardin, Alan Wormington, James N. Flynn); photos on file. Reference: Wormington and Curry 1990.
- 5) 12-23 June 1989: one definitive alternate female, North Bay sewage lagoons, *Nipissing* (Ronald G. Tozer, Michael W.P. Runtz; found by Richard Tafel); photo on file. Reference: Wormington and Curry 1990.
- 6) 19 May 1991: three, Mitchell sewage lagoons, *Perth* (Erwin Meissner, Annie Meissner); photos on file. Reference: Bain 1992.
- 7) 1-2 June 1991: one female, Grand Bend sewage lagoons, *Huron/Lambton* [1 June] (Jeffrey H. Skevington, Cathy Koot) and Parkhill sewage lagoons, *Middlesex* [2 June] (re-found by Bob Hayward, Helen Inch and Spencer Inch). Reference: Pittaway 1995.
- 8) 28 May 1996: one, Long Point (Squires Ridge), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Warren Claydon). Reference: Dobos 1997.
- 9) 26 May 1998: one, Bath, *Lennox & Addington* (Alfred H. Rider); photo on file. Reference: Dobos 1999.

- 10) 31 May – 1 June 1998: one female, Toronto (Leslie St. Spit), *Toronto* (Larry A. Morse, Roy B.H. Smith, John Schmelefske); photos on file. Reference: Dobos 1999.
- 11) 27 December 2001 – 2 January 2002: one definitive basic female, Port Lambton (Snye River), *Lambton* (Larry Cornelis, Blake A. Mann, Harold E. Stiver, Allen T. Chartier); photos on file. Reference: Roy 2002.
- 12) 18 May 2004: one, Pelee Island, *Essex*. Irena Knezevic reported via ONTBIRDS that a Black-necked Stilt, a probable male, was seen by the Pelee Island Bird Observatory staff this morning [May 18]. It was flying northwest over Fox Pond at Fish Point just before 0800h.
- 13) 19 May – 5 June 2004: one definitive alternate male, one definitive alternate female, nest and three eggs, one additional “dropped” egg collected. The birds were first discovered at the Townsend sewage lagoons, *Haldimand* [19 May] (John G. Keenleyside, Daniel Salisbury, R. Douglas McRae, Bruce Di Labio, Tom Thomas, Chris Kimber, Mike Kimber), and later found to be nesting at the Jarvis sewage lagoons, *Haldimand* [19 May – 5 June] (Dennis Lewington, Gwen Lewington, Carl Hamann, Cheryl Edgecombe, Barry Cheriére, Ian Burton, David Milsom, Frank Pinilla, A. Geoffrey Carpentier, Helen Penfold, Mike Penfold, Don Sutherland, Ken Newcombe, Karl Egressey, Barry Jones, Garth Riley); nest and three eggs discovered by Mark K. Peck on 28 May; additional “dropped” egg, discovered 10 metres north of the nest by Glenn Coady on 31 May, was collected by Mark K. Peck (ROM 500585); photos and video on file. This nest apparently failed due to depredation by natural predator some time between 5-8 June 2004.

Note: All of the above records except the latter two have been reviewed and accepted by the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC). These two 2004 records still await eventual review by the committee. A thorough literature search, including Wormington (2004), has failed to reveal any other generally accepted records of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario that have not yet been reviewed by the OBRC.

## **Table 2: Recent extralimital nest records of Black-necked Stilt in adjacent Great Lakes Basin jurisdictions.**

### **Wisconsin**

- 1999      A pair of Black-necked Stilts, found on 27 May 1999 at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge, Dodge County, by Jack R. Bartholmai, successfully raised five young to provide the first state breeding record for Wisconsin (Granlund 1999, Will 1999, Tessen 1999).
- 2004      A family group of two adults and three fledged young was discovered on 22 August 2004 at the Dodge County ponds (north of Beaver Dam), Dodge County, on a Wisconsin Society for Ornithology field trip.
- A lone Black-necked Stilt returned to Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, but no evidence of additional nesting was documented at that site.

## Michigan

- 2003 A pair of Black-necked Stilts was discovered on 10 May 2003 at water impoundments at the Point Mouilee State Game Area, Monroe County. By the fourth week in May, there were two pairs present at this location. Each of these pairs of Black-necked Stilts successfully fledged four young, providing Michigan with its first state breeding records for this species (Svingen 2004).
- 2004 Another pair of Black-necked Stilts was discovered on 2 May 2004 at the Point Mouilee State Game Area by Adam Byrne and Skye Haas. Although this pair continued to be seen into the last week in May, and demonstrated behaviour consistent with another likely breeding attempt (adult seemingly incubating), the birds apparently failed, likely due to habitat flooding from heavy rains in the period 20-21 May 2004 (*vide* Will Weber on Michigan's statewide birding listserv, 22 May 2004).

## Ohio

- 2004 A pair of Black-necked Stilts was discovered at Big Island Wildlife Area, Marion County, in southwestern Ohio (just outside the Great Lakes Basin) on 20 May 2004 by John Kuenzli. They were confirmed to be a male and female pair when re-found on 5 June 2004 by Randy L. Shonkwiler. Multiple observers described behaviour consistent with a probable local breeding attempt in clearly suitable habitat over the period 5-9 June 2004. Although Ohio birders attempted to find evidence to confirm what would have been a first state breeding record for Ohio, the birds disappeared after 9 June 2004. It is quite possible that these birds attempted nesting and failed early in the attempt before confirmatory documentation could be obtained. For a thorough discussion of this occurrence, see: [http://www.ohiobirds.org/news.php?News\\_ID=75](http://www.ohiobirds.org/news.php?News_ID=75)

Note: Ontario's first nesting of Black-necked Stilt coincides with a season for which extralimital breeding records were confirmed in two other Great Lakes Basin jurisdictions (Wisconsin and Michigan) and probable in a third (Ohio).

This first Ontario breeding record also coincides with a year in which unprecedented numbers of Black-necked Stilts were occurring in the Great Lakes area and other areas of recent range expansion in the east. For example, Ohio had six reports involving eight Black-necked Stilts in five different counties in 2004 (compared with seven records of eight birds in the prior 24 years). Wisconsin recorded three birds at two sites as described above. Three birds were discovered in mid May at Rice Lake State Park, Steele/Dodge Counties, in Minnesota. Four birds were present in Bath, Franklin County, in Indiana on 24 April 2004. In Illinois, where the first breeding record occurred in 1995 (McKee and Fink 1995), breeding is now annual in favoured locations, with a growing population. Forty-two Black-necked Stilts were found in Fulton County, Kentucky, where breeding was confirmed in early July 2004, and another seven were found on 2 May 2004 in Boone County, Kentucky. In Tennessee, where the first state records and nesting were documented in 1982 (Coffey 1985), concentrations of Black-necked Stilt sightings are rapidly increasing in the western portion of the state, with unprecedented numbers breeding in Dyer and Lake Counties in 2003, and a peak count of 182 birds by Jeff R. Wilson on 1 June 2003 (Sloan and Palmer-Bell 2003). Across the Mississippi River in southeastern Arkansas, Jeff R. Wilson also recorded 315 Black-necked

Stilts at the Oakwood Unit of Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge, Desha County, on 4 September 1995.

From the pattern of occurrence outlined above, it would appear possible that the Mississippi and Ohio river valleys may be providing a habitat corridor for the spread of the Black-necked Stilt from the Mississippi River drainage basin to the Great Lakes drainage basin.

## Observations

In May 2004, reported sightings of a pair of Black-necked Stilts began appearing on the Ontario Field Ornithologists' listserv, ONTBIRDS (see website: <http://www.ofo.ca/ont-birdsguide.htm>). The reports eventually led to the discovery and documentation of Ontario's first nest of Black-necked Stilt adjacent to the Jarvis sewage lagoons, Haldimand County. Much of the behaviour and

breeding information associated with this nesting is in large part due to the collaborative efforts of individuals sharing observations and information posted on ONTBIRDS.

The following is a summary of ONTBIRDS reports and additional information from other sources concerning the pair of Black-necked Stilts in and around the Jarvis sewage lagoons in May and June 2004.

Tuesday, 18 May 2004: A Black-necked Stilt, a probable male, was seen flying northwest over Fox Pond at Fish Point just before 0800h by staff of the Pelee Island Bird Observatory, Essex County (*vide* I. Knezevic).

Wednesday, 19 May 2004: J. Keenleyside and D. Salisbury discovered a pair of Black-necked Stilts this morning at the Townsend sewage lagoons, Haldimand County. D. McRae, B. Di Labio and T. Thomas observed the birds there later and they were noted flying off to the east. D. Lewington and C. Hamann subsequently rediscovered the pair of Black-necked Stilts at the Jarvis sewage lagoons. Later that afternoon, M. and C. Kimber saw the pair copulate back at the Townsend sewage lagoons.

Thursday, 20 May 2004: At about 0830h, C. Edgecombe observed two Black-necked Stilts at the Jarvis sewage lagoons.

Saturday, 22 May 2004: Two Stilts were observed at the Jarvis lagoons in the afternoon in the southernmost cell. Vocalizations were heard. I. Burton speculated on the possibility of nesting.

Monday, 24 May 2004: D. Milsom observed one of the Black-necked Stilts at the Jarvis sewage lagoons. F. Pinilla observed the pair, in the cornfield, preening, and witnessed vocalizations and interactions with a Killdeer.

Friday, 28 May 2004: G. Carpentier reported the following observations from Wednesday, 26 May 2004. Only one of the pair was vocal, calling softly at first, but both were alert to the observer's presence. One bird (female) was seen to settle on a "fake" nest on the shore of the south lagoon. On Thursday evening, 27 May 2004, Carpentier found only one bird in the lagoon. It vocalized softly throughout the period of observation. The bird (male) was observed settling on the "later to be confirmed" nest in the cornfield northeast of the south lagoon. On Friday

afternoon, 28 May 2004, G. Coady reported that M. Peck had located the stilt's nest, which contained three eggs that morning.

Sunday, 30 May 2004: One of the Black-necked Stilts was observed at about 1100h by K. Egressey.

Tuesday, 1 June 2004: G. Carpentier reported both the male and female were more vocal than usual and reacted quickly to intruders. One of the pair (male) mobbed a passing Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*).

Wednesday, 2 June 2004: H. and M. Penfold observed the pair at the lagoons at about 1350-1410h.

Friday, 4 June 2004: D. Sutherland and several other individuals saw the stilts highly agitated in the cornfield, reacting to a human intruder in the nearby hedgerow/gully.

Saturday, 5 June 2004: G. Riley, N. McPherson, D. Riley and A. Riley saw one of the birds at 0900h.

Tuesday, 8 June 2004: Stilts were not observed despite deliberate searches by B. Jones and K. Newcombe. B. Jones found an eggshell in the cornfield near the nest site.

Wednesday, 9 June 2004: B. Farnan did not find the birds, despite searching.

Wednesday, 16 June 2004: T. Cosburn reported seeing the pair on 4 June.

### **Nest Information (not posted on ONTBIRDS)**

Thursday, 20 May 2004: During five and a half hours of observation from the Jarvis sewage lagoon berms, B. and L. Cherièrè observed both stilts preening and feeding in the south lagoon. One of the birds (male) was defending part of the lagoon from other shorebirds using typical crouch-run aggression displays as described by Hamilton (1975). The birds would regularly fly to the corn stubble field to the northeast of the south lagoon and then return to the lagoon after several minutes. Using a spotting scope, they were able to observe the birds in the cornfield. The birds landed near each other and, while one bird stood quietly nearby, the other bird was observed picking up bits of vegetation from the surrounding area and tossing it onto what they presumed was a nest. After a few moments, the stilt would sidestep a little and continue tossing material onto the same spot. The bird then began making adjustments to the area with its bill while slowly lowering itself onto the nest. The birds returned several times to the same area during the Cherièrè's visit and continued with nest building behaviour. A Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) that had wandered into the nest area was quickly persuaded to leave.

At one point during observations, a heavy rain started to fall. At the time, both birds were feeding in the lagoons but when the rain started one of the birds (female) quickly left the north lagoon and headed back into the field where it remained until the rain had ended. The other bird continued to feed in the south lagoon. Upon returning to the lagoon, the birds continued to feed until one of them (female) stretched her body out horizontally and angled her head slightly downward in a typical sexual solicitation posture as described by Hamilton (1975). It was at that point that the male mounted her and copulation took place. The presumed sex of each bird had been correctly identified prior to copulation. The male was distinguished by black mantle and scapular feathers, and a faint wash of pink/cream colour on his throat, chest and upper belly. The colour of the mantle and scapular feathers was difficult to see on dull, overcast days. The female was browner on the back with a platinum white breast. Approximately an

hour later, the female assumed the same “bowing” position and the subsequent copulation was photographed (Figure 1).

Thursday, 27 May 2004: G. Carpentier contacted M. Peck to inform him of the probable nest site in the unploughed cornfield northeast of the lagoons. Carpentier had been observing the birds with a spotting scope, but was not able to locate the nest because of impending darkness.

Friday, 28 May 2004: M. Peck traveled to the sewage lagoons, arriving at 0830h, and observed both birds feeding in the southern lagoon. After 10 minutes, the male, distinguished by the blacker feathers on the back, flew to the cornfield (Figure 2) and disappeared from view. Using a spotting scope from the fence line between the cornfield and the lagoon, the male was observed walking to the north end of the field and sitting on what appeared to be a nest. A Killdeer was also observed sitting in the field approximately 40 m south of the stilt, but nesting was not confirmed. After 10 minutes of observation, Peck walked to the site and located the nest (ONRS 173915). It was located at 17T 573018 4747719 (North American Datum 1983). During the approach, the male left the nest and walked to the northeast edge of the field, where the female joined him. Both appeared agitated and called noisily during Peck’s visit to the nest site.

The nest was an untidy platform of dead corn stalks, weed stalks and corn leaves with no indication of a lining (Figure 3). It was placed 50 mm above the bare ground and had an outside diameter of 230 mm and an inside diameter of 118 mm. Three pyriform eggs were found in the nest (Figure 4). The eggs were golden brown, heavily marked with dark brownish black blotches concentrated near the larger end. They were measured with digital calipers accurate to 0.01 mm and found to be 42.95 x 30.59 mm, 42.57 x 30.95 mm and 43.23 x 30.79 mm. The eggs were weighed using an electronic balance accurate to 0.1 g and weighed 19.6 g, 20.3 g and 20.1 g, respectively.

While leaving the cornfield and returning to the lagoons, both stilts stayed in front of the observer and performed wing-flapping and false incubation crouching (Figure 5) distraction displays as described by Robinson et al. (1999).

Monday, 31 May 2004: G. Coady and M. Peck returned to the nest site to determine final clutch size and potential incubation period. Coady found a dropped egg (single egg laid on the bare ground without evidence of any scraping or association with any nest), 10 m from the nest. The incidence of such dropped eggs is not uncommon in this species (Sordahl 1996, Robinson et al. 1999). This fourth egg measured 43.85 x 30.85 mm. The egg was cold and obviously faded on one side from sun exposure and had probably lain there for several days. It was salvaged under Canadian Wildlife Service permit CA0080 and is now in the permanent collections of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM 500585). The active nest still contained three warm eggs.

Tuesday, 1 June 2004: The authors contacted B. Jones of Simcoe, who agreed to assist with the protection of the nest. Jones located the landowner, G. Miller, who graciously agreed to minimize disturbance to the nest by delaying ploughing of the field or, if ploughing was unavoidable, to not work in the immediate vicinity of the nest.

Saturday, 5 June 2004: From the lagoon berm, B. Cheriére observed one of the stilts sitting on the nest while the other bird moved between the south lagoon and the cornfield. When Cheriére left the lagoon at 1500h, both birds were still present.



**Figure 1:** Black-necked Stilts copulating in southernmost sewage lagoon, Jarvis, Haldimand County, 20 May 2004. Photo by *Barry S. Cherriere*.



**Figure 2:** Unploughed cornfield directly east of Jarvis sewage lagoons, Haldimand County. Nest of Black-necked Stilt in foreground, 28 May 2004. Photo (ROM 2113) by *Mark K. Peck*.





**Figure 3: Nest and eggs of Black-necked Stilt, Jarvis, Haldimand County, 28 May 2004. Photo (ROM 2114) by Mark K. Peck.**



**Figure 4: Eggs of Black-necked Stilt, Jarvis, Haldimand County, 28 May 2004. Photo (ROM 2112) by Mark K. Peck.**



**Figure 5: Black-necked Stilt performing false incubation crouch distraction display, approximately 70 m from nest, Jarvis, Haldimand County, 28 May 2004. Photo by Mark K. Peck.**

### Discussion

The first report of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario in 2004 was a lone bird flying northwest on the southern tip of Pelee Island on 18 May, approximately 150 km west of Jarvis. Although coincidental, there is no evidence to suggest that this was one of the Jarvis stilts. Based solely on distance to known pairs, it is more likely this was one of the birds that bred in 2003 and possibly 2004 in the Point Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe County, Michigan, located just 55 km northwest of Pelee Island.

Pair formation of Black-necked Stilts may occur on the wintering grounds, on migration, or on the breeding grounds (Sordahl 1984). A

search of the meteorological data for mid May revealed no major storms in the U.S. midwest or along the Atlantic coast. Checking the U.S. drought monitor website (<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>), we did find evidence of abnormally dry to extreme drought conditions throughout much of the Black-necked Stilt's western range and abnormally dry conditions throughout much of the eastern range in 2004. Similar drought conditions were also found in the west from 2000 through 2003, suggesting the extralimital sightings around the Great Lakes Basin may be the result of a prolonged drought. Whether the Black-necked Stilts from Jarvis came from the west, the

Atlantic coast, or were a pair of birds from a previous Great Lakes Basin sighting is not known.

It is our belief that the stilts had arrived together very recently and were probably already paired. Pair bonds are known to be maintained throughout the breeding season (Robinson et al. 1999), so the arrival and disappearance of the birds at the same time is not surprising. During spring migration, both the Jarvis and Townsend sewage lagoons receive considerable attention from birders and it is doubtful the birds would have been in the area for more than a couple of days without being noticed or reported.

The first observations of these birds occurred at the Townsend sewage lagoons, 3.5 km to the northwest of Jarvis, on 19 May 2004. During that day, the birds were reported moving between the sewage lagoons at Jarvis and Townsend and were observed copulating at the Townsend lagoons. At the time of the first observed copulation, we would suggest that the birds were still searching for suitable nesting habitat and had not yet established a territory. The report of nest building and copulation the following day at the Jarvis sewage lagoons demonstrates how quickly this species is able to establish a breeding territory and initiate nesting.

The ONTBIRDS listserv is primarily for bird sightings and it clearly warns contributors not to report rare or endangered species on breeding territories so as not to

cause a species to abandon a nest or breeding attempt because of disturbance. Reports of rare birds are acceptable if the birds can be seen from a public location or at a safe distance. Prior to the reports by the authors on 28 May 2004, all reported observations were following the established guidelines and were providing valuable information on breeding behaviour. However, it was evident from many of the reports that the Black-necked Stilts had established a nesting territory and in all probability were nesting in the vicinity.

Our decision to search for the nest and report it on ONTBIRDS was based on three factors. Our primary goal was to properly document the first known nesting of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario. We had also hoped that by announcing the finding of the nest that we had served a warning to individuals to limit their observations to the lagoon berm. In fact, anyone leaving the berm would have done so knowing they were causing possible disturbance to a very rare Ontario species and, given the interest the birds had generated, were in danger of being observed by other birders. Finally, by locating the nest, we were hoping to protect it by contacting the property owner and requesting his assistance, prior to the field being ploughed.

During each of our visits, we always attempted to minimize disturbance to the nest. This included determining the exact location of

the nest site from a safe distance, using spotting scopes. We were careful to approach and depart the nest from different angles and tried to minimize disturbance to vegetation around the nest site. During our first visit to the nest site, all of the equipment necessary for proper documentation was carried with us, including calipers, scales, global positioning system (GPS), and the necessary photographic equipment. Time spent at the nest was minimized and no attempt was made by the authors to photograph the birds at the nest. The photograph of copulation (Figure 1) was taken in the lagoon and the false incubation crouch distraction display (Figure 5) was digiscoped, approximately 70 m from the nest site, at the edge of the cornfield. Our follow-up visit to the nest was undertaken to determine an accurate clutch size and hopefully to allow us to obtain an accurate incubation period at a later date. This visit inadvertently resulted in the finding of the dropped egg, providing additional information on the breeding attempt. The authors did not revisit the nest after 31 May 2004, but did continue observations from the berm until 5 June 2004.

While it was unfortunate that some individuals did not heed the advice given on ONTBIRDS to stay on the berm, we have come to the conclusion that a natural predator probably depredated the nest. Nesting success rate for this species is dramatically lower when site



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selection occurs away from islands or situations that protect the nest from easy access by ground-based predators (Robinson et al. 1999). Solitary nests amplify this problem in comparison to colonial nesting situations with other Black-necked Stilts or American Avocets (*Recurvirostra americana*). Egg predation has been documented to be the predominant cause of nest failure in Black-necked Stilts (Robinson et al. 1999). During our visits to the Jarvis sewage lagoons, we observed or found evidence of Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), Domestic Dog (*Canis familiaris*), Domestic Cat (*Felis catus*), Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*), all known nest preda-

tors (Robinson et al. 1999), in the general vicinity of the cornfield. The eggshell remains found on 8 June 2004 by Jones and Newcombe further support this conclusion. What effect human disturbance had on the breeding attempt remains unknown.

### Summary

The information presented in this paper documents the first nesting of Black-necked Stilt in Ontario, with material evidence that includes photographs of the nest and eggs, egg measurements and weights, nest dimensions, and a salvaged dropped egg. At present, this represents the easternmost Canadian nesting record for this species, and further demonstrates the ongoing range expansion in eastern North America.

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### Acknowledgements

The information documented in this paper would not have been possible without the generous information provided by ONTBIRDS contributors. We would also like to thank Mark Cranford, Coordinator of ONTBIRDS, for his valuable assistance and collation of reports. We would especially like to acknowledge Barry Jones for his ground support, and Gordon Miller, the owner of the cornfield, for his environmental awareness, his understanding, and his patience. We would like to thank Alan Wormington who provided material from his unpublished manuscript on distributional records of rare birds in Ontario, and Ron Tozer for his helpful comments and assistance with an earlier draft.

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