

# *OFO Bird Finding Guide # 7*

## **A Birder's Guide to Second Marsh Wildlife Area, McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve, and Surroundings**

Jim Richards

### **Introduction**

Located on the north shore of Lake Ontario east of Toronto, the Regional Municipality of Durham offers many prime birding locations for both residents and visitors alike. These range from the forested townships in the north, and Lake Scugog (with extensive wetlands at the south end), through the open rolling meadows and woodlots along the Oak Ridges Moraine, to the creek valleys and dynamic waterfront.

A jewel along the lakeshore (in southeast Oshawa) is composed of three separately owned but physically abutting sites: the Second Marsh Wildlife Area (123 ha, City of Oshawa), McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve (41 ha, General Motors of Canada Limited) and Darlington Provincial Park (208 ha, Ontario Parks). With cattail marsh, swamp, barrier beaches, open meadows, ponds and mixed forest, this area offers much for both wildlife and birders.

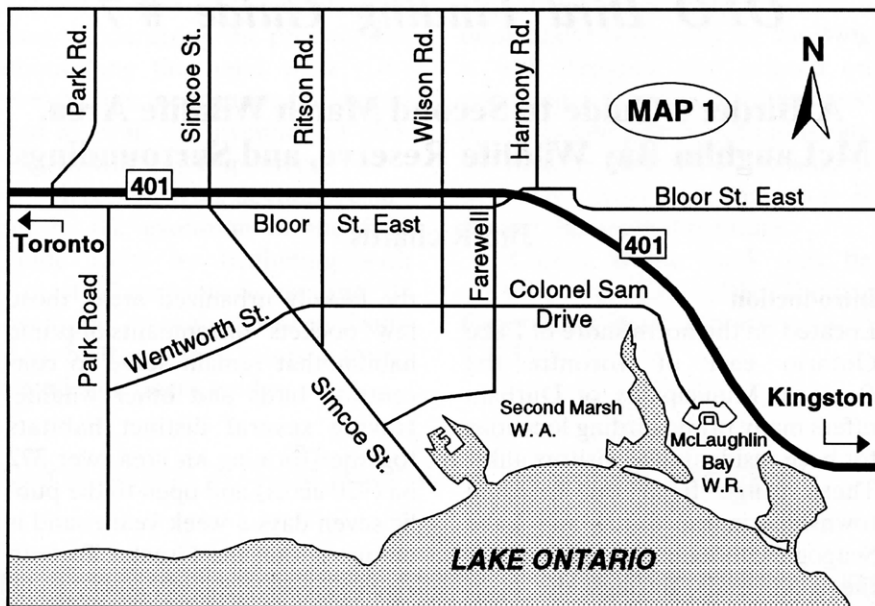
With the rapid loss of wetlands, fragmentation of forests and woodlots and loss of open meadows, especially along the waterfront in

the heavily urbanized areas, those few "pockets" or remnants of prime habitat that remain serve to concentrate birds and other wildlife. Having several distinct habitats together forming an area over 372 ha (920 acres) and open to the public seven days a week year-round is unique within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The official list of Ontario birds as determined by the Ontario Bird Records Committee (Dobos 1998) is 472 species. The unofficial list of birds for the Regional Municipality of Durham currently stands at 349 species. Within this site guide area, 276 species have been reliably recorded, and of these, there is evidence of breeding for 98 species (see Appendix 1).

### **Getting There**

As shown on Map 1, exit Highway 401 at the Harmony Road ramp (Exit # 419). Entering from the west brings you out to the intersection of Bloor Street and Farewell Street. From here, you proceed south on Farewell as described below. Entering from the east brings you out to the intersection of Bloor



Street and Harmony Road. You must turn left at this stoplight, crossing back over the 401 and turn left at the next light (intersection of Bloor Street and Farewell Street). Go south on Farewell Street to the next stoplight (Col. Sam Drive on your left, Wentworth Street on your right.). Turn left (east) on Col. Sam Drive. At a point about 0.5 km east you will reach a crossing for the Waterfront Trail, and the main entrance to the Second Marsh Wildlife Area on your right. On-street parking is allowed here. On the left side of the road you will see a viewing platform for Harmony Pond. These areas are shown on Map 2. Likewise, farther east at a small water-pumping station on your right, the start of the

Marshland Trail allows access to the Second Marsh Wildlife Area and a two-tier viewing deck within the Ghost Road Bush. This entrance also is designated on the site map (Map 2). Limited on-street parking is allowed here. Please be careful not to block the paved service entrance. Follow Col. Sam Drive to the General Motors of Canada Limited (GMC) complex. The first parking lot on your right allows access to both the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve and the Second Marsh Wildlife Area, via the Marshland Trail. A raised viewing deck is located here. The east parking lot (east side of office) allows access to the main trail (Beaton Path) of the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve and the Dogwood

Trail for the visually impaired. Buses should park in the "Visitors" lot, directly north of the office.

### General Information

Birders need not be reminded about good birding ethics but perhaps a word of caution is necessary here to alert visitors to particular circumstances involving dogs. Within Darlington Provincial Park, dogs must be on a leash, and no dogs are allowed on the beaches. There are no dogs allowed anywhere within the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve (except for certified guide dogs on the Dogwood Trail). Within the Second Marsh Wildlife Area, dogs on a leash are allowed on the main paved trail only; dogs are not allowed along the woodland trail through the Ghost Road Bush.

Parking for vehicles is available at all three sites, and for pedestrians and cyclists, all three are linked *via* the Provincial Waterfront Trail. Washroom facilities are only available at Darlington Provincial Park along with telephone access. Emergency telephone access is available at the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve in the GMC Corporate Headquarters.

While high-quality binoculars are a prerequisite for a good birding experience, a scope would be most beneficial for shorebirds and offshore waterfowl in Darlington Provincial Park as well as for viewing waterbirds in Second Marsh, due to the proximity of viewing plat-

forms and the extensive wetlands.

Mosquitoes can be a slight problem within the Ghost Road Bush and along the Marshland Trail during May and June; be prepared. Not unlike any other outdoor activity, proper clothing and footwear will make your visit more comfortable.

Seasoned birders will be aware of such things as what birds are found in certain habitats, what is the best time of year to expect certain species, what is the best time of day (early morning and evening) and what your ID skill level will allow. In areas like the Second Marsh, water levels also play an important role. Low levels, exposing mudflats, will produce more shorebirds in spring and fall, whereas high levels generally produce more waterfowl. For the novice, it is suggested that a good knowledge of habitat requirements can be gained by reading any of the great life histories now available and a study of migration charts and other data will be of prime importance. For example, superb articles in *OFO News* by Ron Pittaway on the fall migration of shorebirds (Pittaway 1999a), and the fall raptor migration (Pittaway 1999b) should be consulted. Rather than a continuous repeat of information contained in these recent articles, there will be few dates given within the text of this site guide pertaining to fall migration. In fact, given the wealth of published knowledge now available for bird movements, frequency and

abundance in Ontario, this site guide will concentrate more on getting you to where the birds should be at particular times of the year. This guide does not pretend to detail specific dates when birds might be observed and as such, terms like “early, mid and late” in conjunction with a particular month or season will be used.

The composite area checklist contained herein (276 species) is preliminary in nature. If you are aware of additional species or discover a new “area” species, please inform the author. An annotated list complete with bar graphs is in preparation and will be published in due time. Not unlike the breeding birds, certain species are not to be expected every year; in fact, some species on the current checklist have only been observed once.

## **BREEDING BIRDS**

A few species that are recorded as breeding in this area do so sporadically or in low numbers. Not all breeding birds listed on the area checklist should be expected to nest here every year, although they may appear as migrants or summer vagrants. This would include species such as: Pied-billed Grebe, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American Wigeon, Hooded Merganser, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Coot, Common Snipe, Little Gull, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Screech-Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Alder Fly-

catcher, Sedge Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Northern Mockingbird, and Brewer’s Blackbird. A total of 98 species has been known to nest within the site guide area. There follows a brief discussion about some of the “specialty” species found within the area.

**Least Bittern:** One or two pairs of this increasingly uncommon species nest annually at Second Marsh. Birds feeding in the marsh are usually encountered at the north end or along the east side.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** First nested in Second Marsh in 1977 (Richards 1978). Nest-building evidence has been found since that time but no active nests have been reported. Adults are encountered here throughout the breeding season, roosting in willows at the southeast end of the Marsh and in an area in the northwest corner.

**Cooper’s Hawk:** A pair nests regularly in Darlington Provincial Park near the main (paved) roadway. Adults searching for food are frequently encountered in the Ghost Road Bush during the spring and summer.

**Little Gull:** The first reported nesting of this species in North America occurred in Second Marsh in 1962, when G.A. Scott found three nests, but none was successful (Scott 1963). The second nesting occurred

there as well, in 1963, when Scott found one nest; it too was unsuccessful (Tozer and Richards 1974). There has been no evidence of breeding here since. These nests and subsequent nestings in nearby Cranberry Marsh (Whitby) in 1971 and 1972 have been summarized by Richards (1973) and Tozer and Richards (1974).

**Common Tern:** This tern nested frequently, but in low numbers, in Second Marsh well into the 1960s. Physical alteration of the Marsh coupled with a widespread decline of this species throughout the province resulted in a decline in Durham Region over the next 30 years. Artificial habitat islands constructed within Second Marsh as part of the Environment Canada restoration project resulted in a return of this species in the mid-90s. Now, between 35 and 75 pairs nest annually, the largest concentration in the Region.

**Black Tern:** Another species of concern, the Black Tern's traditional breeding areas are no longer producing results. Once very common in Second Marsh, between 15 and 20 pairs now occupy the area.

**Sedge Wren:** A rare breeding species in Durham, at least one pair is usually present on the east side of Second Marsh within the weedy fields of the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve. Scott found a nest

with six eggs in 1962, and Richards located a nest with six eggs in 1997.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** Found in widely scattered sites throughout Durham, this area seems to be heavily favoured by the species. Perhaps more than 15 pairs inhabit the Ghost Road Bush, with additional pairs found in the willows north of Col. Sam Drive in the Harmony Pond area and along the Cool Hollow Trail in McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve.

**Brewer's Blackbird:** Usually a rare seasonal vagrant in Durham, it did breed in 1968 when two active nests were found by Richards and Peck (1968) only a few metres apart in both Darlington Provincial Park and what is now the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve. There has been no breeding evidence since that time.

## BIRDING AREAS

### Second Marsh Wildlife Area

Pedestrians and cyclists can enter the main trail off Farewell Street (see Map 2, Point "B"). Visitors with vehicles can park on Col. Sam Drive, and enter at Point "A". The paved trail is 1.25 km in length. Part of the extensive (Provincial) Waterfront Trail, it is known as the Ed Kroll Memorial Walkway.

Prior to entering the trail system, you may wish to access the viewing platform immediately across (north) from the Second



Figure 2: Common Moorhen at nest. Photo by *J.M. Richards*.



Figure 3: Sora near nest. Photo by *J.M. Richards*.

Marsh Wildlife Area sign on Col. Sam Drive. If the water is high and the vegetation low, you can see Harmony Pond from here. This shallow basin is an ideal location for viewing waterfowl, herons and shorebirds, especially in the spring.

A series of three groves of spruce trees on the north edge of the Ghost Road Bush along Col. Sam Drive just east of the bridge is almost a sure bet for wintering Northern Saw-whet Owls. They are generally found from mid-October onwards, but can become rare by late December.

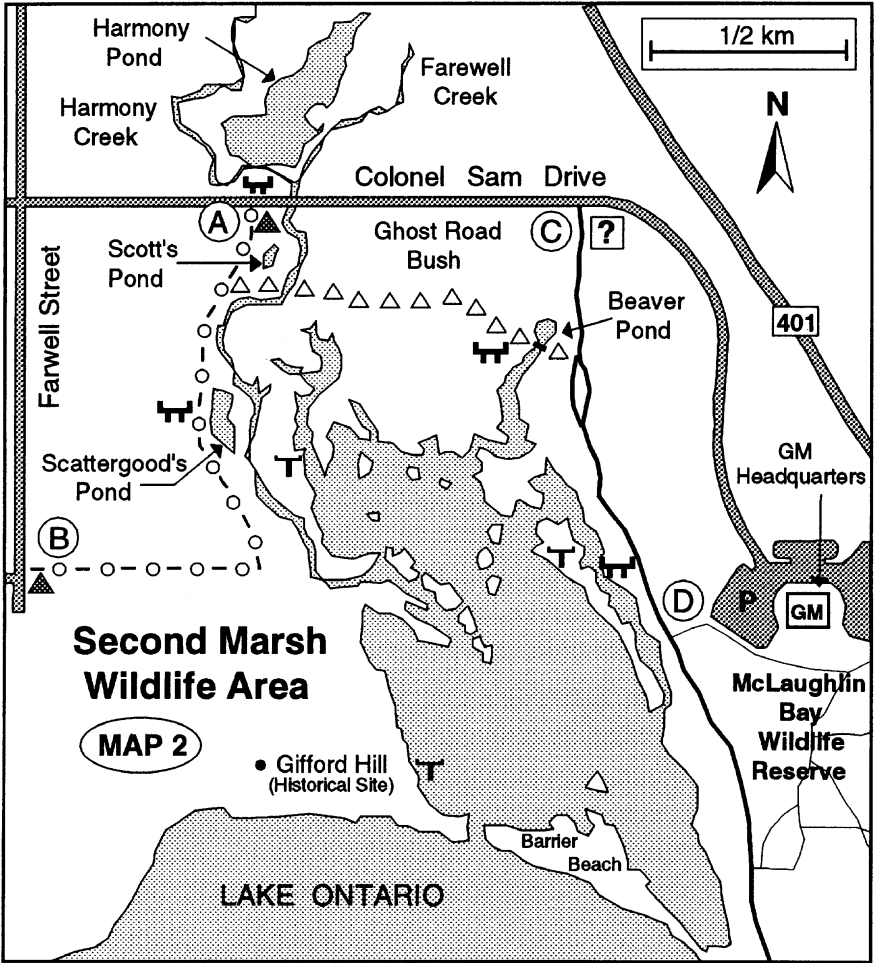
After entering at Point "A", the visitor passes a sign on the right listing all partners in the community effort to rehabilitate Second Marsh, provide signage and construct walking trails. Just past this feature, a low, seasonally wet area known as Scott's Pond (on your left) usually harbours such species as Virginia Rail and common waterbirds such as Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler and Great Blue Heron, along with expected species like Red-winged Blackbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow.

A little farther along the trail, you will encounter a snake hibernaculum. Just past here is a steel bridge which crosses the Harmony/Farewell Creek, but we will come back to this in a moment. Here and elsewhere along the creek you may hear and see Belted Kingfisher.

Continuing along the paved trail as it skirts the creek beside a

row of willows (sometimes good for warblers), you come to a viewing platform on the left overlooking Scattergood's Pond. Along with the opportunity to view Snapping and Painted Turtles basking on the raised mounds and logs, you can usually find a muskrat or two working the pond. Waterfowl such as Wood Duck are sometimes encountered here in low numbers along with interesting species such as Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Solitary Sandpiper. Great Horned Owls are sometimes found in the spruce and pine trees along the edge. A feeding station located here and operated during the winter months by Friends of Second Marsh usually attracts Mourning Doves, Northern Cardinals, Blue Jays, Black-capped Chickadees, White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Dark-eyed Juncos, American Goldfinches and American Tree Sparrows.

Southward from here, the trail passes along the edge of Second Marsh but does not afford great viewing. However, it is possible to see waterfowl, gulls and terns flying over the marsh. Various swallow species also can be seen along here. The paved trail takes a sharp turn to the right (near the end) and at this point, a walking trail to the left leads southward past a No Trespassing sign. **Please do not access this area.** The trail is for use (by permission of the landowner) by Friends of Second Marsh for



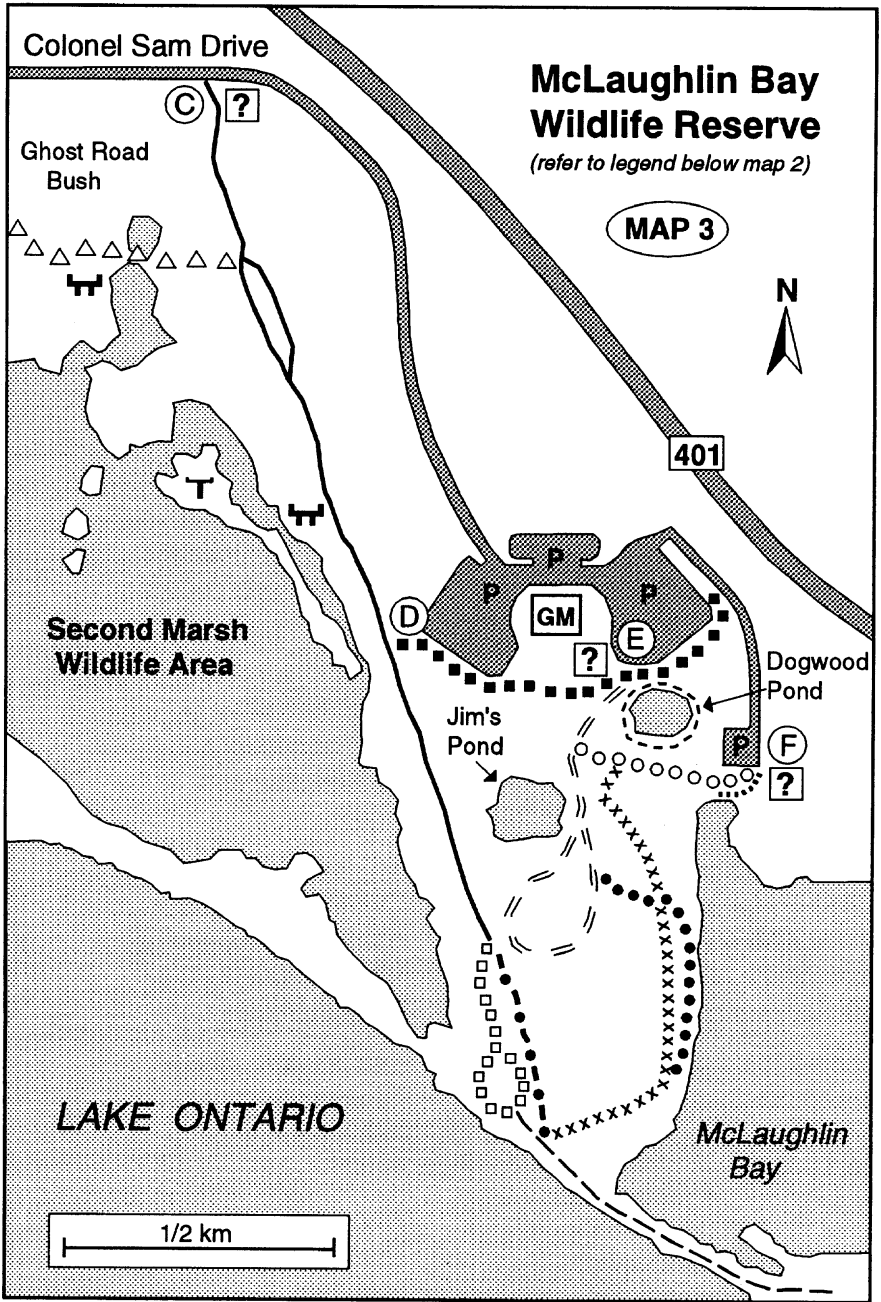
**Second Marsh Wildlife Area**

**MAP 2**

	OSM Wildlife Area Sign		Information		Osprey Platform
	Veiwng Platform		Parking		Entry Points
	Marshland Trail		Shoreline Trail		
	Paved Trail		Dogwood Trail		
	Boardwalk Trail		Bayview Trail		
	The Beaton Path		Bayside Trail		
	Cool Hollow Trail		Oshawa Trail		
	Woodland Trail		Darlington Trail		
	Flank Trail				

*please use this legend for both maps*





planting and monitoring purposes only. After the trail turns to the right (west) up the hill and back to Farewell Street, a commanding overview of the marsh can be experienced. Now back to the bridge!

A steel bridge leading east off the paved trail takes you into the Ghost Road Bush. This trail is known as the Bob Mills Boardwalk (1340 m). The first section leads through a low wet area dominated by willow. Black-crowned Night-Herons can be seen here on occasion. Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe and Baltimore Oriole are found here along with other songbirds.

Soon the trail enters the main swamp, which is predominantly Red Ash with aspen, poplar, hawthorn and other tree/shrub species. The boardwalk meanders through the woodland affording access at trailside to numerous small ponds with habitat for Wood, Leopard, and Green Frogs as well as American Toad. Over 375 species of vascular plants are found at Second Marsh and many interesting and showy species can be discovered along the boardwalk such as Jack-in-the-pulpit, White Trillium, Yellow Lady-Slipper, Blue Flag and several fern species. White-tailed Deer are sometimes encountered along the trail, especially near the east end. The full range of woodland bird species can be found here at the right time of year and especially during spring (early April to

late May) and fall (late August to mid-October) migration periods. Warblers, vireos, thrushes, flycatchers, wrens, orioles, tanagers and grosbeaks are found here in great variety and good numbers then, and several species remain throughout the summer to breed.

Near the east end of the trail, a two-tier viewing platform offers a spectacular panorama southward over the marsh. Again, most of the large numbers of waterfowl are found during spring and fall migration periods, but numerous species of ducks along with Canada Geese and a few Mute Swans breed in and around the marsh and therefore are present during the summer. Many heron species are found in the marsh, from Great Blue Heron and Green Heron to seldom-seen species like Least Bittern and Great Egret to the more spectacular vagrants like Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron and Tricolored Heron on rare occasions. American Woodcock nest in the vicinity and White-tailed Deer frequent the area. A small ponding of shallow water right at the base of the tower (created by beavers) is a good place to see Virginia Rail, and sometimes Sora and Least Bittern.

Just north of the tower, but well within view, a beaver pond (sometimes active) provides a dynamic habitat for several species such as Green Heron, Least Bittern, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Wood Duck, Northern

Pintail and Hooded Merganser, and numerous songbird species. Nesting boxes here and elsewhere throughout the marsh provide homes for Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers and Eastern Screech-Owls.

The trail continues east past the tower for a short distance before joining the Marshland Trail on the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve. In this section of the Ghost Road Bush, you are most likely to find Blue-gray Gnatcatchers; a few pairs nest in this area each year. A winter feeder here serves to attract the same species as the previous one, as well as Common Redpolls and other erratic finches and any wintering blackbirds and sparrows. Visitors can enter at Point "C" on Map 2 and walk directly to the Beaver Pond Tower.

Another location to enter Second Marsh is provided at Point "D" off the GMC parking lot. A short trail takes you to a raised viewing deck offering a good vista of the marsh and ideal viewing opportunities (a scope is useful). From here, you can fully enjoy a better look at most of the waterfowl such as Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, both scaup species, Bufflehead and mergansers. As well, you can observe herons from this vantage point and the nesting islands for Common Terns. From here as well, you can see Black Terns, grebes, Common Moorhens and the abundant

Double-crested Cormorants roosting on islands. It is from this viewing platform that you can witness sometimes massive flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls on migration from mid-April through May. Usually mixed in with these noisy visitors are upwards of 10 to 15 Little Gulls. Marsh Wrens can be seen and heard from this location. Caspian Terns are more often encountered during August than at any other time.

In years when water levels are low, especially from late August well into October and sometimes later, the exposed mudflats play host to numerous species of shorebirds during migration, sometimes in spectacular numbers.

The quiet waters at the southeast corner of the marsh can be accessed from the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve (Cool Hollow Trail) and are worth a visit to see Spotted Sandpipers, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Common Moorhens, herons and waterfowl. Visitors are discouraged from walking farther west on the barrier beach during the breeding period (May to June) so as not to discourage frequent nesting attempts by herons and other species.

The gravel beaches here and southward on Beaton Point are sometimes good for shorebirds (especially in the fall). Species such as Ruddy Turnstone, plovers and "peeps" can be numerous at times, and Great Black-backed Gulls can

be quite common beginning in early September and continuing throughout the fall and winter.

### **McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve**

Once an active dairy farm, this 81 ha property is now the home of General Motors of Canada Limited (Corporate Headquarters). About 41 ha have been set aside as permanent open space to preserve the waterfront, buffer and complement Second Marsh, and offer the public access to the lakefront. The Reserve is open seven days a week, free of charge. Over 38,000 trees and shrubs (mainly native; a few ornamentals along the main trail) have been planted to provide wildlife habitat. When fully grown, the tree/shrub zones will occupy about 40% of the property, while the remainder will stay as wetland and open meadow.

The main entrance to the Reserve (see Map 3, Point "E") is off the east parking lot. This trail (Beaton Path) is of granular surface, suitable for wheelchairs. A guide-rope starting here takes visitors to the Dogwood Pond (on your left) which was designed for the visually impaired. This pond is a good place to see Midland Painted Turtles, Green Frogs and a variety of marsh and water birds, as well as plants. Common Snipe are sometimes found in the wet area south of the pond in spring. Just prior to reaching the entrance to the Dogwood Trail, another short trail on your

right will take you to the Second Marsh viewing platform. Another option is to park in the west parking lot and to take the trail to the platform (access Point "D").

Just past the Dogwood Trail entrance, an old roadway will take you over to Darlington Provincial Park. As well, you can access the area by driving past the GMC office, taking a gravel roadway to a small parking lot (access Point "F").

Farther along the 832m Beaton Path, you will come to Jim's Pond (on your right). Waterfowl and shorebirds (Pectoral Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, and yellowlegs) use this pond for feeding during migration and ducks use the shallow waters here for brood rearing. Herons frequent the pond, and terns (Black and Common) are frequently seen here along with swallows feeding overhead. A pair of American Kestrels has nested in a box on a dead tree on the south side of the pond for several years, and Purple Martins often utilize an apartment house nearby. Sedge Wrens have been known to nest in this area. Visitors are advised to stay on the trails as several songbirds nest in the grassy meadows, along with many waterfowl such as Mallard, Gadwall and teal. As well, species such as Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon and Northern Pintail favour certain areas, especially near Jim's Pond. These same meadows, overgrown with thistle, goldenrods and asters, play host to



Figure 4: Common Tern on nest. Photo by *J.M. Richards*.



Figure 5: Little Gull at nest. Photo by *J.M. Richards*.

migrating Monarchs in late August and throughout September

Farther up the trail, you will come to an area known as the "Hilltop" (a drumlin). In addition to a good view of Jim's Pond, Second Marsh and McLaughlin Bay, along with a chorus of House Wrens, Baltimore Orioles, and other common songbirds, picnic tables provided here make this an ideal setting for lunch.

From the Hilltop, you can descend eastward on the Bayview Trail, then take either the Oshawa Trail or the Bayside Trail to skirt McLaughlin Bay. This is a good idea if rafts of waterfowl are present in the Bay. Otherwise, stay on the Beaton Path. It is a loop trail and it will bring you back to Jim's Pond. Another option is a trail on your right (just past the loop) which is the terminus of the Marshland Trail. This trail will be described later.

Continuing on the Beaton Path, you will soon come to a spur trail on your left that will take you along the edge of a future forest zone. Trees of many varieties, including some Carolinian species such as Redbud, Hackberry, Tulip Tree, and Magnolia have been established here. This is a good area to see and hear numerous songbirds; it can be great during migration periods for warblers, flycatchers, thrushes and sparrows.

Another option at this gentle "fork" is to continue along the trail between the willows and Silver

Maples through an area known as "Cool Hollow". Again, this area can be dynamic for songbirds, especially during spring migration (early to mid-May). Soon, the trail breaks out on the Lake Ontario shore. You can access the southeast portion of Second Marsh by staying to the right, or go straight ahead to the beach. Staying on the trail as it turns to the left (it soon becomes the Oshawa Trail) will bring you back to Jim's Pond area. If you wish to access the beach and follow it to your left (out Beaton Point), you can walk over to Darlington Provincial Park (Beaton Point becomes McLaughlin Point once inside the Park boundaries). Please do not access the barrier beach fronting Second Marsh in May and June as Night-Herons and other species continue attempts to nest here and must not be disturbed.

The waters off Beaton Point/McLaughlin Point (and Darlington Park) can be especially productive (spring and fall) for certain types of waterfowl such as Common Goldeneye, Oldsquaw, Redhead, scoters and mergansers. As well, these waters should be checked for loons and grebes. The beaches here act like magnets for certain shorebirds (spring and fall) like Ruddy Turnstone, Black-bellied and American Golden-Plover, Sanderling, and Dunlin. Other species like Least and Semipalmated Sandpiper and Spotted Sandpiper are also found here, and it is the most likely

location for rarities such as Purple Sandpiper and phalaropes.

The Marshland Trail (1710 m) actually starts at the water pumping station on Col. Sam Drive (see Map 3, access Point "C"). Here, it skirts the edge of the Ghost Road Bush and offers good birding for species such as Baltimore Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Great Crested Flycatcher, Cedar Waxwing and other songbirds. A short trail off to the right will take you to the Beaver Pond and the viewing platform. A Yellow-breasted Chat was found here in 1999, and Northern Mockingbirds have been observed along here. Continuing southward, as it winds its way along the edge of the marsh, it passes through habitat for Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink. Some of this habitat (outside of the Reserve, near Col. Sam Drive) will be lost in the future to office buildings. Farther south, you will come to another observation deck with a good overview of the east side of Second Marsh (see previous section for details). A short trail just south of here takes you back to the GMC parking lot. Continuing south along this mown grass trail, you should hear some of the many Marsh Wrens found at Second Marsh and see species such as Common Yellowthroat, Alder and Willow Flycatcher. Resident Coyotes are sometimes encountered along here in early morning and evening. The trail ends near Cool Hollow, described above.

Hawk migration in the fall (early September to late October) can sometimes be spectacular, with large numbers and numerous species observed. Usually, by mid-September, many species such as Merlin, American Kestrel, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Broad-winged Hawk are present. A good knowledge of weather conditions is important to ensure a successful watch. Species such as Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle, Turkey Vulture, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk and Osprey are also found here, along with others such as Red-tailed Hawk and Northern Harrier (which also breed here). Beginning in mid-September and continuing for about a month, waves of migrating Blue Jays are often encountered flying westward along the waterfront and inland.

Winter birding on the Reserve is generally unproductive unless there is sufficient open water in the marshes for gulls and waterfowl. Species such as Snowy Owl, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawk, Snow Bunting, Lapland Longspur and American Pipit sometimes are present in the open meadows.

### **Darlington Provincial Park**

Located immediately east of the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve, this 208 ha forested zone offers yet another great birding opportunity along the waterfront. The mixed forest provides good habitat for many species of birds and other

wildlife. A wooded creek valley (Robinson Creek) is ideal for warblers, migrant songbirds and resident Great Horned Owls. The extensive, open shoreline, especially along McLaughlin Point, a sand/gravel barrier beach separating Lake Ontario from McLaughlin Bay, is renowned for shorebirds, especially in the fall. The offshore waters are excellent for diving ducks and other waterfowl. Waterfowl hunting is allowed here in season, so be prepared to time your visits accordingly.

There are 315 camping sites in the Park and about 3.2 km of walking trails. Trails here link to existing trails in the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve where cyclists and pedestrians can enter, and to the east via the Provincial Waterfront Trail. Vehicle entry is from Courtice Road off Highway 401 (Exit # 425).

No attempt is being made here to detail birding opportunities with-

in the Park. It is deserving perhaps of its own site guide.

### **Additional Birding Information**

The standard reference (long out-of-print) to the birds of Oshawa, and Durham Region, is *Birds of the Oshawa-Lake Scugog Region, Ontario* (Tozer and Richards 1974). More recent information is contained in the five issues of *Durham Region Natural History Report*, produced annually from 1989 to 1993 by M. Bain and B. Henshaw. In addition, B. Henshaw authored various breeding bird monitoring reports for Friends of Second Marsh, from 1995 to 1999. Current birding information is available on the Durham Region Birding Hotline at (905) 576-2738. Lastly, a 76-page booklet, *Second Marsh Wildlife Area/McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve: A Visitor's Guide*, is available from Friends of Second Marsh (\$5.00).

### **Other Information Sources**

The **City of Oshawa** web site [www.city.oshawa.on.ca/co\\_res/nat\\_env.html](http://www.city.oshawa.on.ca/co_res/nat_env.html) contains a section on local hiking trails and parks in addition to information dealing with the Second Marsh Wildlife Area. Likewise, the **Municipality of Clarington** web site [www.municipality.clarington.on.ca/](http://www.municipality.clarington.on.ca/) has a section of interest.

**Friends of Second Marsh** have a major web site [www.secondmarsh.com](http://www.secondmarsh.com) containing much information about the history of the marsh, natural ecology and about the programs and projects of the organization (in prep.).

**General Motors of Canada Limited** carries a major page on the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve within their corporate site. [www.gmcanada.com](http://www.gmcanada.com) (in prep.).



The **Darlington Provincial Park** web site [www.ontarioparks.on/darl.html](http://www.ontarioparks.on/darl.html) has information about natural history and camping opportunities.

The **Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority** web site [www.speedline.ca/cloca/home](http://www.speedline.ca/cloca/home) contains much information about natural history in addition to information about camping.

The **Ontario Field Ornithologists** web page, with access to current birding information, sightings, etc., is [www.interlog.com/~ofo](http://www.interlog.com/~ofo)

The **Ontario Birding** web page, with reports and sightings sometimes pertaining to this area is [www.web-net.com/bic/ont/index.html](http://www.web-net.com/bic/ont/index.html)

**Environment Canada** with several web pages of interest also has a section dealing with the restoration efforts at Oshawa Second Marsh and other Great Lakes wetland issues. Please check out the following:  
[www.cciw.ca/green-lane/wildlife/glwcap](http://www.cciw.ca/green-lane/wildlife/glwcap) (Conservation Action Plan)  
[www.cciw.ca/green-lane/cuf](http://www.cciw.ca/green-lane/cuf) (Great Lakes Cleanup Fund)  
[glimr.cciw.ca/tmp/glimr/publication.cfm?ID=w123&lang=e](http://glimr.cciw.ca/tmp/glimr/publication.cfm?ID=w123&lang=e) (Habitat rehabilitation)  
[glimr.cciw.ca/tmp/glimr/publication.cfm?ID=098&Orig=Glimr&Lang=e](http://glimr.cciw.ca/tmp/glimr/publication.cfm?ID=098&Orig=Glimr&Lang=e) (Great Lakes 2000)

### Acknowledgements

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## Appendix 1

### A Checklist of the Birds of Second Marsh, McLaughlin Bay and Darlington Park

This list comprises those species (276) that have been recorded within the Second Marsh Wildlife Area, McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve and Darlington Provincial Park. Of these, 98 species (marked thus \*) are known to have bred here. Classification and nomenclature follow the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list of North American Birds* (7th edition, 1998) and its supplements.

- |                               |                          |                           |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| — Red-throated Loon           | — Ring-necked Duck       | — Black-bellied Plover    |
| — Common Loon                 | — Greater Scaup          | — American Golden-Plover  |
|                               | — Lesser Scaup           | — Semipalmated Plover     |
| — Pied-billed Grebe*          | — King Eider             | — Piping Plover           |
| — Horned Grebe                | — Common Eider           | — Killdeer*               |
| — Red-necked Grebe            | — Harlequin Duck         |                           |
| — Eared Grebe                 | — Surf Scoter            | — Greater Yellowlegs      |
|                               | — White-winged Scoter    | — Lesser Yellowlegs       |
| — Double-crested Cormorant    | — Black Scoter           | — Solitary Sandpiper      |
|                               | — Oldsquaw               | — Willet                  |
| — American Bittern*           | — Bufflehead             | — Spotted Sandpiper*      |
| — Least Bittern*              | — Common Goldeneye       | — Upland Sandpiper        |
| — Great Blue Heron            | — Hooded Merganser*      | — Whimbrel                |
| — Great Egret                 | — Common Merganser       | — Hudsonian Godwit        |
| — Snowy Egret                 | — Red-breasted Merganser | — Ruddy Turnstone         |
| — Little Blue Heron           | — Ruddy Duck             | — Red Knot                |
| — Tricolored Heron            |                          | — Sanderling              |
| — Cattle Egret                | — Osprey                 | — Semipalmated Sandpiper  |
| — Green Heron*                | — Bald Eagle             | — Western Sandpiper       |
| — Black-crowned Night-Heron*  | — Northern Harrier*      | — Least Sandpiper         |
|                               | — Sharp-shinned Hawk*    | — White-rumped Sandpiper  |
| — Glossy Ibis                 | — Cooper's Hawk*         | — Baird's Sandpiper       |
|                               | — Northern Goshawk       | — Pectoral Sandpiper      |
| — Turkey Vulture              | — Red-shouldered Hawk    | — Purple Sandpiper        |
|                               | — Broad-winged Hawk      | — Dunlin                  |
| — Greater White-fronted Goose | — Red-tailed Hawk*       | — Curlew Sandpiper        |
| — Snow Goose                  | — Rough-legged Hawk      | — Stilt Sandpiper         |
| — Canada Goose*               | — Golden Eagle           | — Buff-breasted Sandpiper |
| — Brant                       | — American Kestrel*      | — Short-billed Dowitcher  |
| — Mute Swan*                  | — Merlin                 | — Long-billed Dowitcher   |
| — Trumpeter Swan              | — Gyrfalcon              | — Common Snipe*           |
| — Tundra Swan                 | — Peregrine Falcon       | — American Woodcock*      |
| — Wood Duck*                  |                          | — Wilson's Phalarope      |
| — Gadwall*                    | — Ring-necked Pheasant*  | — Red-necked Phalarope    |
| — Eurasian Wigeon             | — Ruffed Grouse*         | — Red Phalarope           |
| — American Wigeon*            |                          |                           |
| — American Black Duck*        | — King Rail              | — Long-tailed Jaeger      |
| — Mallard*                    | — Virginia Rail*         | — Laughing Gull           |
| — Blue-winged Teal*           | — Sora*                  | — Franklin's Gull         |
| — Northern Shoveler*          | — Common Moorhen*        | — Little Gull*            |
| — Northern Pintail*           | — American Coot*         | — Black-headed Gull       |
| — Green-winged Teal*          |                          | — Bonaparte's Gull        |
| — Canvasback                  | — Sandhill Crane         | — Ring-billed Gull        |
| — Redhead                     |                          | — Herring Gull*           |

- Iceland Gull
- Lesser Black-backed Gull
- Glaucous Gull
- Great Black-backed Gull
- Caspian Tern
- Common Tern\*
- Forster's Tern
- Black Tern\*
  
- Thick-billed Murre
  
- Rock Dove\*
- Mourning Dove\*
- Passenger Pigeon (extinct)
  
- Black-billed Cuckoo\*
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo\*
  
- Eastern Screech-Owl\*
- Great Horned Owl\*
- Snowy Owl
- Barred Owl
- Long-eared Owl
- Short-eared Owl
- Boreal Owl
- Northern Saw-whet Owl
  
- Common Nighthawk
- Whip-poor-will
  
- Chimney Swift
  
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
  
- Belted Kingfisher\*
  
- Red-headed Woodpecker\*
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker\*
- Hairy Woodpecker\*
- Northern Flicker\*
- Pileated Woodpecker
  
- Olive-sided Flycatcher
- Eastern Wood-Pewee\*
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
- Alder Flycatcher\*
- Willow Flycatcher\*
- Least Flycatcher\*
- Eastern Phoebe\*
- Great Crested Flycatcher\*
- Western Kingbird
- Eastern Kingbird\*
  
- Loggerhead Shrike
- Northern Shrike
  
- White-eyed Vireo
- Yellow-throated Vireo
- Blue-headed Vireo
- Warbling Vireo\*
- Philadelphia Vireo
- Red-eyed Vireo\*
  
- Blue Jay\*
- American Crow\*
  
- Horned Lark\*
  
- Purple Martin\*
- Tree Swallow\*
- N. Rough-winged Swallow\*
- Bank Swallow\*
- Cliff Swallow
- Barn Swallow\*
  
- Black-capped Chickadee\*
  
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- White-breasted Nuthatch\*
  
- Brown Creeper
  
- House Wren\*
- Winter Wren
- Sedge Wren\*
- Marsh Wren\*
  
- Golden-crowned Kinglet
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
  
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher\*
  
- Eastern Bluebird\*
- Veery\*
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Swainson's Thrush
- Hermit Thrush
- Wood Thrush
- American Robin\*
  
- Gray Catbird\*
- Northern Mockingbird\*
- Brown Thrasher\*
  
- European Starling\*
  
- American Pipit
  
- Cedar Waxwing\*
  
- Golden-winged Warbler
- Tennessee Warbler
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Nashville Warbler
- Northern Parula
- Yellow Warbler\*
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Magnolia Warbler
- Cape May Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Pine Warbler
- Prairie Warbler
- Palm Warbler
- Bay-breasted Warbler
  
- Blackpoll Warbler
- Cerulean Warbler
- Black-and-white Warbler
- American Redstart\*
- Ovenbird
- Northern Waterthrush
- Connecticut Warbler
- Mourning Warbler\*
- Common Yellowthroat\*
- Hooded Warbler
- Wilson's Warbler
- Canada Warbler
- Yellow-breasted Chat
  
- Scarlet Tanager
  
- Eastern Towhee
- American Tree Sparrow
- Chipping Sparrow\*
- Clay-colored Sparrow
- Field Sparrow
- Vesper Sparrow
- Savannah Sparrow\*
- Grasshopper Sparrow
- Henslow's Sparrow
- Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
- Fox Sparrow
- Song Sparrow\*
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- Swamp Sparrow\*
- White-throated Sparrow
- White-crowned Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco
- Lapland Longspur
- Snow Bunting
  
- Northern Cardinal\*
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak\*
- Indigo Bunting\*
  
- Bobolink\*
- Red-winged Blackbird\*
- Eastern Meadowlark\*
- Rusty Blackbird
- Brewer's Blackbird\*
- Common Grackle\*
- Brown-headed Cowbird\*
- Orchard Oriole
- Baltimore Oriole\*
  
- Pine Grosbeak
- Purple Finch
- House Finch\*
- Red Crossbill
- White-winged Crossbill
- Common Redpoll
- Pine Siskin
- American Goldfinch\*
- Evening Grosbeak
  
- House Sparrow\*