

# Quebec Region

## YVES AUBRY AND PIERRE BANNON

Spring was generally cool and wet. Precipitation was particularly abundant in the Gaspé Peninsula and on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence. Late winter storms dumped six inches of snow in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean Region May 13, and four inches in some parts of the Gaspé Pen., May 27. Ice remained on most lakes until the second week of May, even in the South, and vegetation was one–three weeks late in southern Quebec.

Notwithstanding some early warblers were reported in the Montreal area late in April, the arrival of most neotropical migrants was very slow throughout May and ended rather abruptly after a peak of short duration May 21–24 in southern Quebec.

## Grebes to Waterfowl

Noteworthy were 100 Red-necked Grebes at Hull, along the Ottawa R., Apr. 16 (G. Dupuis) and 50 at Beauport, *Quebec* May 4 (A. Côté, C. Nadeau). A Pied-billed Grebe reached Baie-Comeau May 8 (GC) and an Am. White Pelican turned up at Quyon, *Pontiac* May 31 to provide the Region's 17th record (A. Dentremont). Out-of-range Great Cormorants involved three birds discovered at Quebec City Apr. 9, one remaining in the area until May 5 (J.D. Lebreton, *vide* ADR).

Southern waders overflow into the Region in smaller numbers than usual. Single Great Egrets strayed N to Rivière-Saint-Jean, *Du-plexis* (N. Boisvert, G. Paquin) and Pointeaux-Outardes, *Baie-Comeau* in May (GB). A Snowy Egret visited Quyon May 1 (M. Bergeron) and an imm. Little Blue Heron paused at Nicolet, *L. Saint-Pierre* May 18 (PE). Only two Cattle Egrets showed up, the first at Baie-du-Febvre, *L. Saint-Pierre* May 10 (ADA) and the second at Notre-Dame-du-Lac, *Témiscouata* May 4 (J. Baillargeon, *vide* J. Larivée). A Green Heron, the first in 13 years for the Saguenay, was an exciting find at La Baie Apr. 23–29 (H. Simard, S. Tremblay *et al.*). Single Black-crowned Night-Herons at Val-d'Or Apr. 18 (A. Lefebvre, D. Langevin) and Rouyn May 18 (M. Gauvin *et al.*) were rare occurrences in Abitibi. In contrast with last spring, the Glossy Ibis made a very poor appearance, with only one bird noted at Rimouski Apr. 30 (G. Proulx).

The season total of 15 Tundra Swan included a group of seven at Deschênes, *Gatineau* May 10 (RB), one of five at Réservoir Decelles, *Témiscamingue* May 13 (A. Bourget), and single birds at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 20–30 (m.ob.), Berthierville May 15–31 (M&M Boulard, m.ob.), and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu May 20 (M. Arnaud, L. L'Écuyer). Reports of eight Greater White-fronted Geese followed the pattern established in recent years. The concentration of Snow Geese at Baie-du-Febvre peaked at an estimated 200,000 birds Apr. 20, down from the 250,000 of last spring (DJ, P. Messier). Thirteen Ross' Geese, including three blue-morph birds, were picked out of flocks of migrating geese. A Barnacle Goose at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 10 provided the Region another record and further discussion on the question of origin (R. Lacerte). A specimen of a small race of the Canada Goose was detected at Saint-Gédéon, *L. Saint-Jean* May 6 (CC). There was a strong showing of Eurasian ducks, with five "Eur." Green-winged Teals and 16 Eur. Wigeons reported, both totals being the highest ever. A high count of 88 Harlequin Ducks was made at I. Bonaventure, *Percé* May 26 (G. Chapdelaine); locally rare in spring was a single bird at St. André, *L. Saint-Jean* May 21–22 (R. Dumont).

## Vultures to Shorebirds

Eight Turkey Vultures wandered E of Québec City, reasserting the pattern of recent springs. Hawkwatchers at Saint-Fabien, *Rimouski*, and Valleyfield respectively tallied 60 and 16 Bald Eagles, high counts by recent standards (RP *et al.*, M. McIntosh *et al.*). At the edge of its range, the Red-shouldered Hawk was reported from Alma, *L. Saint-Jean* (CG, MS) and from Saint-Eusèbe, *Témiscouata*, where a bird in display Apr. 30 provided the first prospects of local breeding (MB). Particularly interesting was the discovery of two of the western forms of the Red-tailed Hawk: a "W." Red-tailed Hawk, *B.j. calurus*, at Chicoutimi May 3 (CG, MS) and a "Kriider's" Hawk at Ormstown, *Huntingdon* May 15 (M. Bertrand *et al.*). Nine Gyrfalcons lingered into March and April, including a very late one at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 29 (CR).

In a continuing study of the status of the Yellow Rail in Québec by the Canadian Wildlife Service, ten birds were banded at Dundee, *Huntingdon* May 17–25 (MR). Away from the Abitibi and Témiscamingue regions where they are regular migrants, northbound Sandhill Cranes are being seen with increasing frequency; a total of 18 birds were reported, including one e. to Anse-au-Griffon, *Gaspé* May 10 (D. Gagné, M. St-Amour) and nine in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean for a new Regional high (*vide* GS). Two

Piping Plovers at Dune-du-Sud, *Magdalen I.*, Apr. 24 were the earliest ever (CR, I. Hubert). An Am. Avocet graced Cacouna, *Rivière-du-Loup* Apr. 27–30 (GG, m.ob.). The only Hudsonian Godwit was discovered at Berthierville May 14 (DD *et al.*). More Marbled Godwits than usual wandered E into the Region, with one at Baie-du-Febvre May 8–10 (E. Bastien, FG), single birds at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu May 15–17 (DD, F. Gariépy) & May 28–29 (JMB), and a fourth at nearby Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix May 29 (PB). A Purple Sandpiper at Saint-Augustin, *Québec* March 21 was extremely early and could have been a bird that wintered somewhere along the St. Lawrence R. (RL, F. Hamel). Ruffs, represented by females only, were sighted in above-average numbers: singles at Métabetchouan, *L. Saint-Jean* May 12–14 (CC, GS), Baie-du-Febvre May 10 (ADA), Saint-Vallier, *Bellechasse* May 22 (G. Lemelin *et al.*), and Les Boules, *Rimouski* May 27 (M. Larivée *et al.*). Several sightings in the Upper Richelieu valley May 14–29 might have involved more than one bird (m.ob.). A Short-billed Dowitcher at Rimouski Apr. 27 was record-early by one day (GG), while a record 1284 birds were grounded in the Upper Richelieu valley May 22 (PB). Rare inland was a Red Phalarope at Portneuf, May 29 (CM).

## Gulls to Woodpeckers

Now an expected find, an ad. Laughing Gull was spotted at Havre-aux-Basques, *Magdalen I.*, May 31 (FS, S. Lessard). Only one Little Gull was found, an adult at Métabetchouan May 12–13 (CC, GS). None were detected in the Montreal area, where an average of five–six birds was commonplace in the 1980s. The Com. Black-headed Gull also made a poor appearance, with a single adult identified at Saint-Romuald, *Lévis* Apr. 19–21 (FG *et al.*). On the other hand, Lesser Black-backed Gulls are found with increasing frequency in spring: one at Hull Apr. 2 (D. Dallaire *et al.*), one at Aylmer Apr. 8 (JD), a 3rd-year bird at Saint-Fulgence, *Saguenay* May 1 (CC, GS), an adult at Berthierville May 8 (J.P. Hameury), an adult at Baie-Comeau Apr. 19–May 13 (GC, GB), and a 2nd-year bird at Saint-Blaise, *Upper Richelieu* May 21 (J. Hardy). The passage of Arctic Tern was most spectacular in the Lower St. Lawrence: a group of 50 stopped at Rivière-Ouelle, *Kamouraska* May 30 (CA), while the 3000 at Cacouna May 25—although not identified to species—were probably *S. paradisaea* (CM *et al.*). An ad. White-winged Tern at Oka, *Deux-Montagnes* May 30, furnished the Region's first record since a bird visited Saint-Gédéon for 3 consecutive years in the mid-1980s (B&JP. Lismonde).

Almost never reported e. of Trois-Rivières, an E. Screech-Owl observed at Rimouski Apr. 5 (GG, *vide* J.R. Pelletier) represents a rare occurrence for the lower St. Lawrence region. A northward movement of Snowy Owls was locally detected at La Pocatière in late March (CA), while the 10 Short-eared Owls that wintered at Pointe-aux-Trembles, *Montreal* were still present by the end of March (*vide* C. Morin). Observers from Magdalen I. questioned the absence of that species this spring. The wintering Red-bellied Woodpecker at Saint-Armand, *Missisquoi* was still present by early May (KK) while another male was reported from Île Perrot, *Vaudreuil* Apr. 9 (*vide* M. Ainley).

### Titmice to Shrikes

Four Tufted Titmice were observed at Saint-Armand March 20, where they overwintered (m.ob.); these birds were singing Apr. 30 (B. Hamel) and one was even seen into May at the same locality (KK). Another bird was at Blainville, *Terrebonne* May 10 (R. Fournier). The White-breasted Nuthatch made a good showing in the Saguenay, the Lower St. Lawrence, the Gaspé Pen., and even in the Magdalen I. region; this eastward movement possibly heralds a breeding range expansion.

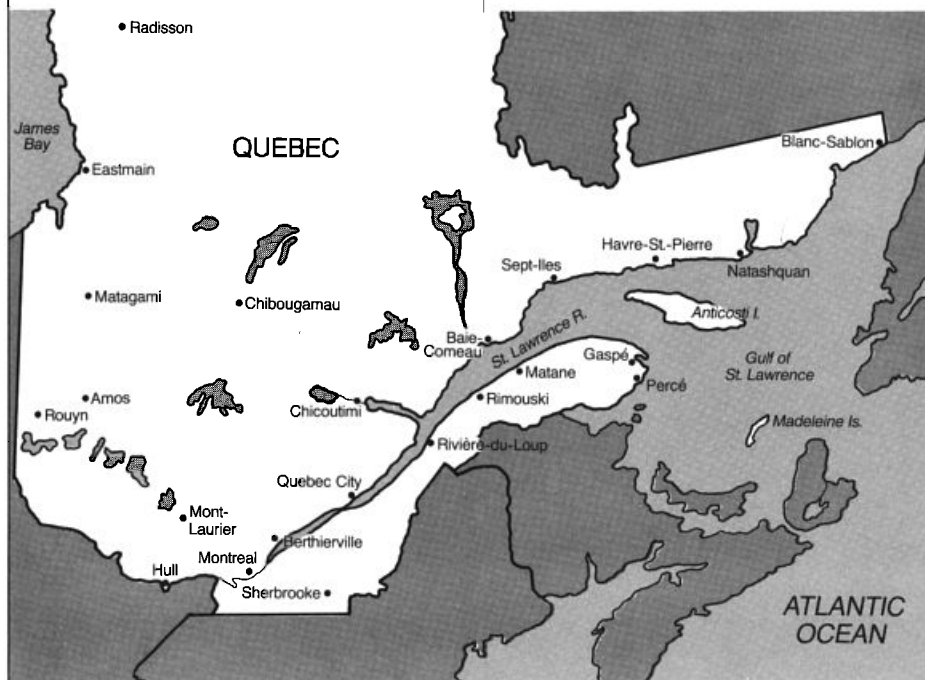
The Carolina Wren was reported in March from Longueuil (O. Simard), Saint-Lambert, *Montréal* (G. Woodward), and Crabtree, *Joliette* (*vide* R. Piché), while a bird overwintered at Drummondville (L. Beaudoin) and two—most probably a pair—were observed at Beaconsfield Apr. 15 (M. Cloghesy). Exceptional in spring, four N. Wheatears graced s.e. Que-

bec, including single female-type birds at Pointe-Label, *Saguenay* May 29 (GB) and Penouille, *Gaspé* May 26 (D&J Young), a single male at Bergeronnes, *Saguenay* June 3 (A. Bouchard), and an unsexed bird at Newport, *Gaspé* May 29 (A. Blais). Single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were reported at a number of localities in the Montreal area and from L. Beauchamp, *Gatineau* May 8 (A. Cloutier), from Saint-Jacques-de-Montcalm, *Lanaudière* May 13 (P. Gaudet, B. Dugas) and from Pointe-aux-Loups, *Magdalen I.*, May 31 (FS, A. Richard), while two nesting pairs were observed at Pointe-du-Gouvernement, *Upper Richelieu* in late May (m.ob.) and a pair was building their nest at Aylmer May 16 (JD). Two ♀ **Mountain Bluebirds**, the 5th and 6th for the Region, enlightened Bergeronnes May 17 (GC) and Bic Provincial Park, *Rimouski* May 13 (RP).

A Brown Thrasher survived last winter's extreme cold and was still present at Aylmer March 19 (M. Catterell), providing a 4th wintering record for the province. Twenty northbound Bohemian Waxwings reached Havre-aux-Maisons, *Magdalen I.*, Apr. 6 (DG, G&B Vigneau) and nine were at nearby Old Harry Apr. 16 (DG, G&CA Gaudet); less surprising were 11 birds in n.c. Quebec at Laforge May 6–9 (A. Reed, J. Hughes). Single Endangered Loggerhead Shrike appeared at Pointe-Calumet, *Deux-Montagnes* March 14–22 (J.M. Lismonde), Quyon, *Gatineau* Apr. 9 (JD), Sainte-Scholastique, *Deux-Montagnes* May 21 (N. David), Le Gardeur, *L'Assomption* Apr. 22 (J. Sanscartier), Saint-Georges, *Beauce* May 20 (L. Légaré), and Cap Tourmente, *Montmorency* Apr. 12–25 (RL, GH).

### Warblers to Finches

A Blue-winged Warbler, the 16th for the province, was grounded by cold weather at Charny May 11–13 (FG). A ♀ Golden-winged Warbler at Chateau-Richer, *Montmorency* (GH) provided one of the few for that area. A Yellow Warbler at Longueuil Apr. 19, broke the record earliest date for the province by one day (L&J Leblond) while a Magnolia Warbler at I. des Soeurs Apr. 28 matched the earliest date known for the province (RB). A well described ♂ **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Bonaventure May 9 (J.M. Pitre) provided a first for that area and the 8th for the Region. The wintering ♂ Pine Warbler on Notre-Dame I., *Montreal* was still present Apr. 1. The Cerulean Warbler is colonizing medium-sized deciduous woodlots in s. Quebec. Apart from those regularly reported at Philipsburg and Huntingdon, three birds were singing in a mature stand of Swamp White Oak at Pointe-du-Gouvernement from mid-May onwards. Elsewhere, a ♀ Cerulean at Summit Park May 18 and a singing male at I. des Soeurs May 22 were both migrants, while one at Deschenes May 17 (RB) may nest in that area. There were only 12 reports of the **Worm-eating Warbler** in the province before this year and no record since 1980. So the 4 sightings reported in the Montreal area came as a real surprise. Singles were at Summit Park Apr. 24 (M. Beauchamps) and Montreal Botanical Gardens Apr. 30 (R. Thibault *et al.*), one was singing at Longueuil Regional Park May 9–13 (JMB, DD, m.ob.), and one was briefly seen at the Boucherville Islands Provincial Park May 14 (Y. Roy, L. Cournoyer). A N. Waterthrush at Summit Park Apr. 27 broke the provincial earliest date by one day (RB). Before this year there were only 8 Regional records for the **Louisiana Waterthrush**, 7 from the Ottawa valley and none from Montreal area. This spring at least three birds were reported in the Montreal area: One was singing at Philipsburg May 7–15 (J.G. Papineau, m.ob.), one was well observed in downtown Montreal May 12 (R. Lebel, A. Vezeau), and a last bird was discovered in the Mount Royal Cemetery May 14 (R. Colderoni *et al.*). Undoubtedly the most unexpected bird of the spring, a first for the province and Canada, was a ♂ **Hepatic Tanager** well studied at close range in the Mount Royal Cemetery, *Montreal* May 24 (R. Guillet, L. D'Amours, R. Lebel *et al.*). The bird showed up again the next day after being attracted by a recording of its song (PE, N. Roy). All the observers emphasized the heavy black bill and dark cheek patches. Areas of yellow were present on the lower belly, suggesting a 2nd-year bird. A first spring ♂ **Summer Tanager** at Saint-Anaclet, *Rimouski* May 28 (G. Ouellet, J.L.



Martel *et al.*) provided the 17th for the province.

Extralimital overwintering N. Cardinals involved a male at Sainte-Foy, *Quebec* (G. Dubé), a female at Chicoutimi (*fide* GS), a female at La Pocatière (CA), and a male at Notre-Dame-du-Lac, *Témiscouata* (L. Bourgeois, *fide* MB). A single Indigo Bunting appeared at a feeder in an extensively forested area at ZEC Martin-Valin, *Saguenay* (E. Côté, R. Tremblay) while three individuals reached Rimouski Apr. 15–21, one at Dégelis, *Témiscouata* May 31 (J. Caron, D. Keable), and one at Gaspé Pen. at Grande-Rivière May 6 (M. Dupuis). A ♂ Painted Bunting stayed at a feeder with Purple Finches at Berry near Amos, *Abitibi* May 28–30 (S. Slavenski, A.G. Bernier, ph.), providing the 2nd record for the province. The 18th record of Lark Spar-



**Lark Sparrow at Saint-Léon, Quebec, in mid-May 1994. Eighteenth record for the province. Photograph/Claudette Cormier.**

row for the province appeared with a White-Crowned Sparrow at a feeder of Saint-Léon, *L. Saint-Jean* May 9–17 (R. Savard *et al.*, ph.). Three birds of the w. subspecies *Z.l. gambelli* were also observed, one at Chicoutimi May 14 (CG, MS) and two at the Saint-Léon feeder May 15 (CC, GS *et al.*, ph.). The overwintering White-crowned Sparrow at Notre-Dame I. was still present Apr. 1. The Le Conte's Sparrow made an excellent showing; one that appeared at Dundee May 18 was followed by a



**White-crowned Sparrow of the western race *Z. l. gambelli*, one of three recorded in Quebec this season, at Saint-Léon May 15, 1994. Photograph/Claudette Cormier.**



**Male Orchard Oriole patronizing a hummingbird feeder at Pabos Mills, Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec, at the end of May 1994. Photograph/J.M. Smith.**

2nd May 23 (MR), and singles at Deschênes, *Ponriac* May 18 (RB), Saint-Gédéon May 22 (MS *et al.*), and Saint-Fulgence May 22 (CC, GS). An extralimital E. Meadowlark was reported from Rivière-Portneuf, *Duplessis* Apr. 13 (GC). The only Orchard Oriole for the province was a male at Pabos Mills, *Gaspé Pen.* May 29–June 2 (J-M Smith *et al.*, ph.). The House Finch is gradually extending its limits northwards; sightings included L. Kénogami and Saint-Léon, both in the *Saguenay* (R. Larouche, M. Goulet, CC, GS *et al.*), Baie-Comeau (A. Gosselin), and many localities in the Lower St. Lawrence region.

### EXOTICS

A pair and an incubating Ring-necked Pheasant were observed on Île aux Oies, *Montmagny* May 19, while two Wild Turkey were sighted there May 30 (CM, C. Simard). These two species were released by a local hunting club last fall. A Budgerigar showed up at Quebec City Apr. 15 (LM, ADA, A. Rasmussen).

### ADDENDUM

A ♂ Blue Grosbeak at Saint-Félicien, *L. Saint-Jean* was well described May 16, 1993 (J. Langlais), providing Quebec's 15th record.

### Initialed observers and area editors (in bold face):

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# New England Region

## SIMON PERKINS

New England birders enjoyed another stellar spring season. No one was left out as rarities were spread equitably among all six states. Maine produced the biggest "biggies," including two species new to the state. Little Egrets popped up again, Black Vultures and kites attracted more attention, and a Black-tailed Godwit dropped in at Cape Cod for the second consecutive year. Northern Wheatear and Mountain Bluebird were icing on the cake. Even the warbler migration brought smiles this year, amid continued consternation and debate regarding the subject of tropical deforestation and temperate forest fragmentation, and the effects on neotropical migrants. Cape May Warbler, always a welcomed sight, was particularly well represented. Various overwintering rarities, including Varied Thrushes and Harris' Sparrow, as well as irregular visitors such as winter finches, lingered into the spring season.

Weatherwise, New England saw the usual assortment of everything: March continued the snowy trend established during the winter and, in so doing, set a record for snowfall in a season. For the 104 years of Boston's documented meteorological history, that record now stands at 96.3 inches, more than seven inches over the previous record set in 1947–1948. April, by contrast, was completely snowless in Boston, and temperatures during the month averaged 3.3 degrees F. above normal, no doubt quite a relief for some human and avian residents alike. In mid-May, the development of an "omega block" in the jet stream caused a relatively small ocean storm to stall east of Cape Cod. This storm produced moderate, but persistent, easterly winds that ultimately nudged a few seabirds within sight of land.

It's time, once again, to express a huge measure of gratitude to the subregional compilers in New England, who make the jobs of the regional compilers so much simpler. This year, those people included Judy Peterson in Vermont, Diane DeLuca in New Hampshire, Jody Despres and Bill Townsend in Maine, David Emerson in Rhode Island, Frank Mantlik in Connecticut, Seth Kellogg in western Massachusetts, and Richard Forster, Marjorie Rines,