checklist committees to accept this species as a valid North American vagrant. A casual visitor from the Bahamas, a Bananaquit made viewing difficult because of obscure plumage and shyness at Boca Raton Apr. 21-May 3 (BHH, m.ob.). On Dog I., Franklin this spring no Scarlet Tanagers were banded or seen (DSE, LRM), whereas last year 14 were banded and over 100 seen. At Boca Raton, Stripe-headed Tangers, rare visitors from the Bahamas, were found: a female Apr. 16-20 (BHH, m.ob.) and a male Apr. 18-20 (MG, BHH, m.ob.). A flock of 12 Dickcissels was an outstanding number at D.T., Apr. 25 (KTK, m.ob.). The high number of Bachman's Sparrows totaled 89 at a preserve in e. Orange Apr. 16 (LW), and this species was considered "very numerous" at Starkey Wilderness Park, Pasco Mar. 24 (RWS). Three Henslow's Sparrows, seldom found this far s., were seen in Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary, Okeechobee Mar. 6 (HPL, GSH, EDB, SH). Seven White-crowned Sparrows were a good number for *Duval Apr.* 7 (MKD), but one at a St. Petersburg feeder was very late May 2-7 (BET, VSM). Twenty-five Shiny Cowbirds provided a high count this season at Key West May 12 (JAO). Over 60 Orchard Orioles were counted throughout Pinellas Apr. 7-10 (MSW, LSA, DNG, m.ob.), and 50 stopped at D.T., Apr. 8 (BP). A pair of House Finches were sighted at Cross City Apr. 9 (BW, BobW, LAN, RWS) and may have been as far s. as a pair has been seen.

Corrigenda

The LaSagra's Flycatchers reported in *AB* 47:407 at McArthur S.P. was Apr. 9, not 10; and the one at D.T. was found May 2 by B. Zimmer (m.ob., ph. KTK).

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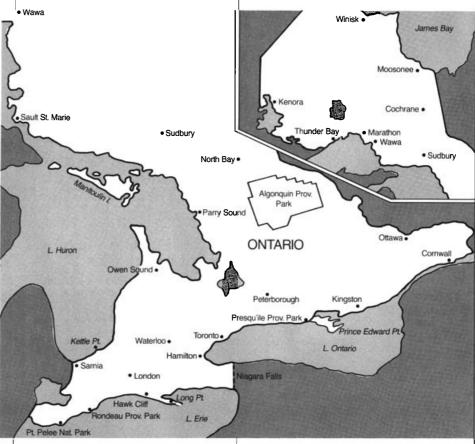
# Ontario Region

## **RON RIDOUT**

Spring across the province was topsy-turvy. While March behaved as it should, April was May, with many record-high temperatures in mid month, and May was April, setting some record-low marks though remaining relatively dry.

An incredible 107 record-early dates for 82 species were set across the province, many a result of April's heat wave. Eleven of these dates were all-time marks for the province! At the same time, many waterfowl tarried in the south, a result of late ice breakup and cool water temperatures well into May.

The aforementioned "dog days" of April and their accompanying southerly breezes pushed several raptor species past the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch in record numbers. Other species groups moved through in numbers closer to normal. Both full-time observatories experienced a good but not exceptional spring. Rarities included Brown Pelican, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck,



American Oystercatcher, and Fish Crow. All rarities mentioned in the report are subject to the approval of the Ontario Bird Records Committee (O.B.R.C.).

Abbreviations: Pelee (Pt. Pelee Nat'l Park and vicinity); P.E.Pt. (Prince Edward Pt.); L.P.B.O. (Long Pt. Bird Observatory); T.C.B.O. (Thunder Cape Bird Observatory); Algonquin, Presqu'ile, and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in italics refer to counties or regional municipalities.

## **Loons to Herons**

The pattern of Red-throated Loon migration is not totally clear, but 3 sites have emerged as focal points in recent years. A total of 192 Redthroateds were counted at Hamilton Apr. 2-15, with a peak of 103 Apr. 10 (RC et al.). Numbers were down along the Bruce shoreline of L. Huron, though 34 off Pt. Clarke Apr. 24 (DF et al.) were notable. Several dozen passed by Thunder Cape, Thunder Bay during May, with a peak of 20 May 5 (T.C.B.O.). Pacific Loons may prove to be a rare but regular migrant there. One was seen May 1 (DB) and two May 3 (MH). High counts of Com. Loons included 350 at P.E.Pt., Apr. 16 (RDW), while the annual Manitoulin Is. count recorded 300 May 14 (JN). A count of 300 Horned Grebes at P.E.Pt., Apr. 16 (RDW) was encouraging but the species, in the main, has suffered a serious decline in recent years. Not so for Red-neckeds, which were recorded in increased numbers, with peaks of 417 off Oakville Apr. 5 (MK) and 180 at Mississagi Light, Manitoulin May 1 (IN) and away from the Great Lakes at several inland locales. Lone Eared Grebes were found at Hamilton Bay Mar. 27 (WE), P.E.Pt., Apr. 16 (RDW), Schomberg May 4–14 (GB,PG), and Townsend May 12+ (DM, m.obs.).

Stray Am. White Pelicans away from the northwest included four over Port Perry Apr. 19 (DW), four at Pumpkin Pt., Algoma May 6 (DEu), singles at Long Pt., May 13 (BG) and Kettle Pt., May 25 (AR), and five at Rondeau May 28 (JL). A Brown Pelican was



Far from normal haunts was this adult Brown Pelican which appeared in May on Lake Erie. This photo was taken June 2, 1994, over the harbor at Port Dover, Ontario. Photograph/Kayo Roy.

seen in the afternoon in Hamilton Harbour May 10 (GW) and then reappeared May 31 on L. Erie in the vicinity of Port Dover, where it remained for 4 days (m.ob.). Great Egrets away from the southwest numbered 15, with the most northerly a very early one at Ottawa Apr. 11 (J-PC). The nine Snowy Egrets reported were an excellent total. Singles were at Kate's L., Lanark Apr. 29 (CB, LF); St. Davids May 1 (JBl); Sunbury Rd., Frontenac May 10 (SH); near Grimsby May 15-21 (RC, m.ob.); L.P.B.O., May 21 (GG, FJ); w. Toronto May 22-23 (m.ob.); Port Royal, Norfolk May 26 (RR); Dorland May 28-June 1 (KH et al.); and e. Toronto May 29 (v.o.). The only Little Blue Heron was at Long Pt., Apr. 20 & 23 (RS et al.). A single Tricolored Heron was seen at Rondeau May 22 (WA). An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Rondeau May 4–22 (SC, KB, JB) was joined by a 2nd bird May 22 (m.ob.). One adult was at Kingsville May 29 (AW).

## **Waterfowl to Cranes**

Difficult to explain was the presence of 12 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks at Kingsville May 16 until late in the month (KBe et al.). This 2nd occurrence for the province follows on the heels of a group of 9 birds last year. Ice prevented substantial Tundra Swan congregations in the usual s.w. Ontario marshes, so the flocks concentrated in the fields near Grand Bend, where a feeding program attracted a peak of 16,356 Mar. 24 (AR). The 25 Greater White-fronted Geese, the highest total since 1989, included six at Kingsville Mar. 1 (NM); 11 at Hillman Marsh, Essex Mar. 7-10 (AW); and a different four there Mar. 18 (AW). Singles were at Long Pt., Mar. 19-22 (m.ob.); Grand Bend Mar. 25 (AR); Turkey Pt., Mar. 26 (EC, AWa, DAS); Wildwood L., Oxford Apr. 2 (JMH, AV); Hamilton Apr. 10 (RDa); and Thunder Bay Apr. 16 (WC). The Turkey Pt. individual exhibited characters consistent with the subspecies flavirostris for which the province has very few records. With only one previous record for s. Ontario, three different Ross's Geese were remarkable. Pelee's first-ever appeared Mar. 7-Apr. 11 (AW) and was joined by another Mar. 30-Apr. 11 (AW). Long Pt.'s second, an immature, was found Mar. 13-24 (ED, m.ob.). A peak of 2700 Brant at Amherst I., May 21-22 (K.F.N.) was part of what was considered a poor flight. Numbers were higher farther east at Kanata, with 1000 counted May 21 (BD). Three different, rare for the province "Richardson's" Canada Geese involved singles at Hillman Marsh Mar. 12-24 (AW) and Apr. 9-14 (AW), and at Currier, Oxford Mar. 25 (JMH).

A Green-winged Teal at Hillman Marsh Mar. 25 (AW) showed a mix of characters of both subspecies *crecca* and *carolinensis*. A

Cinnamon Teal at Rondeau May 13-15 (RE et al.) was keeping company with a female that appeared to be a Cinnamon as well. Sightings of Eur. Wigeon included singles at Long Pt., Mar. 22-Apr. 1 (A.M.&RR et al.); Pelee Mar. 22-Apr. 9 (AW, m.ob.); Kingston Apr. 8 (JMn); Balmoral Apr. 18 (RK); Hillman Marsh Apr. 22 (TH et al.); and St. Isidore May 21 (L&BD). Burlington's wintering Tufted Duck was last seen Mar. 5 (RD et al.), while the Com. Eider there remained one day longer (m.ob.). Pelee's first-ever Com. Eider was seen Mar. 19 & 25 (JD, PA, TH). Well above-average numbers of Harlequin Ducks included 2 interesting situations. A male at Presqu'ile Apr. 4-May 28 (L&BD) was joined there by a female May 14-24, and the pair wintering at Sault Ste. Marie remained throughout the spring (m.ob.). Other sightings involved two at Pickering Mar. 1 (MB), one at Sarnia Apr. 7 & 20 (JC,DMi), three at Cranberry Marsh, Durham Apr. 30 and May 8 (RP, JI)—one of which remained to May 21 (PH et al.), and three at Westport May 8 (C&ECo). Lingering Barrow's Goldeneyes included the Burlington male until Mar. 5 (m.ob.) and the Lakefield male until Mar. 18 (TB). New sightings involved a female at Tavistock Apr. 18 (JMH) and a very late male at Amherst I., Lennox Addington May 21 (K.F.N.).

The lone Black Vulture of the spring was seen over Fifty Pt., Niagara May 31 (BM). An exceptionally early Osprey was seen at L. Katchawanooka, Peterborough Mar. 20 (PP). Hawkwatchers were astounded when an Am. Swallow-tailed Kite appeared in a kettle of birds at Grimsby on a record early Apr. 15 (PR et al.). A pale Red-tailed Hawk at Dorland, Oxford Apr. 22 (JMH) displayed all the characteristics of the "Krider's" subspecies. The 18 Golden Eagles reported in the south were well above the spring average, as were the 30 Peregrines reported. Gyrfalcons included a white bird at Gros Cap, Algoma Mar. 4 (DR), the wintering dark bird nearby on the St. Mary's R. until Mar. 14 (EC), a gray bird on the Sauble R., Bruce Mar. 9 (PM), and four different birds around Thunder Bay, the last one seen Apr. 27 (m.ob.).

Two leks of Sharp-tailed Grouse in *Thunder Bay* marked the first time that displaying birds had been found in the district since 1949 (NE *et al.*). Up to 10 Yellow Rails were heard in one sedge marsh in n. *Victoria* in May, and several other locations in the area had birds as well (RP, m.ob.). All birds had stopped calling by the end of the period. The 10 King Rails reported was an exceptional total. Up to five birds were noted at Hillman Marsh from May 7+ (PT, m.ob.), three were heard in the St. Clair marshes during May (JH), one at Walpole I., *Lambton* May 13 (GC), and one was well n. at the Rankin R.,

Bruce May 26 (PM). Sandhill Cranes were reported in every region of the province and are becoming so numerous that several regions no longer report total numbers. While the first bird was at Pelee Mar. 19 (PA et al.), the most eager migrant by far was at Bruce Station Mar. 20 (SM).

#### Shorebirds to Woodpeckers

While several observers lamented a listless littoral passage, there were notable moments. The 1500 Black-bellied Plovers at St. Clair N.W.A. May 28 (MC) were exceptional. Lone Piping Plovers were at Presqu'ile Apr. 21–24 (MT et al.); Long Pt., May 9 & 12 (RK, SW, PNP); Great Duck I., Manitoulin May 22 (JN, HB et al.); and L. of the Woods May 26 (DE, CE). Ontario's third American Oystercatcher flew off the tip of Long Pt., May 17 (PNP). Record early Am. Avocets involved one at Long Pt., Apr. 17 (W&NW et al.) and six at Hillman Marsh the same day (RJ). Single Willets at Thunder Bay May 4 (SP, BA, NE) & May 11 (GW), Pelee May 11 (TP et al.) & May 15 (DM), Hillman Marsh May 13 (MBa), and Erie Beach May 19 (K&EJB, JB) were well below the average spring total. A count of 2000 Whimbrel at w. Toronto May 25 (RS) topped a strong flight. Good counts elsewhere included a record 350 at L.P.B.O., May 23 (GG et al.), 267 at Pelee May 24 (K&LS, JF) and 12 at Eva L., May 26 (BJ), the 3rd record for the Atikokan area. Continuing recent trends of poor spring numbers, Hudsonian Godwit sightings included one at Strathroy May 15 (DD), another at Thunder Bay May 21 (m.ob.), and four at Moosonee May 23 (SS). Marbled numbers were right on average, with an early bird at Erieau Apr. 17 joined there by a second Apr. 19 (K&EJB et al.), one e. of Trenton May 7 (SB), another at Hamilton May 8 (DSy et al.), and up to two at Hillman Marsh May 10-16 (JLe, m.ob.).

Noteworthy spring sightings included a W. Sandpiper at Hillman Marsh May 13-16 (JD et al.), single Baird's Sandpipers at Norwich May 7-12 (JMH et al.) and L.P.B.O.'s first-ever spring sighting May 21 (RB), a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Learnington May 13 (MM), and a Long-billed Dowitcher at Nonquon, Durham Apr. 30 (RP, JI). Observers were puzzled by a very different bird at Hillman Marsh May 18-20 (KM, ph. AW, m.ob.) which was finally believed to be a hybrid Dunlin x White-rumped Sandpiper. Always rare but seemingly annual sightings of Curlew Sandpipers involved one at Harrow May 8-10 & 13-14, one May 11 at Cottam (KK, EJ, m.ob.), and one at Grand Bend May 11-20 (JS, v.o.) joined there by a second bird May 15-17 (AM, v.o.). Sightings of Ruffs included: a black male at Smithville



An apparent hybrid Dunlin X White-rumped Sandpiper at Hillman Marsh, Ontario, May 19, 1994. Details of this previously unknown hybrid will be published elsewhere. Photograph/Alan Wormington.

Apr. 23–29 (MK, RY, m.ob.), a Reeve at Harrow May 8–14 (KK, EJ, m.ob.), another Reeve at Grand Bend May 17 (AR, DRu, JS), a cinnamon male at Elmvale May 21 (DSt), a male and female at Casselman May 21–22 (L&BD), and a male at P.E.Pt., May 29 (JE,RDW).

Spring sightings of jaegers are unusual in the south; a dark-phase Parasitic at Burlington May 22 (BDu, JSn) was noteworthy. Laughing Gulls appeared in good numbers. Individuals were at Rondeau May 9 (KB) & 22 (MK); L.P.B.O. May 18 (PNP); Whitby May 19 (PH, m.ob.); and L. Erie off the Fisherville Rd., May 26 (GP). Still less common were Ione Franklin's Gulls at Blenheim Apr. 29 (KB), Thunder Bay's 2nd record May 1 at T.C.B.O., and Cranberry Marsh, Durham May 23 (EA). Among 52 Little Gulls seen, 18 at Whitby Apr. 29 (PH) were notable in that six were still present at nearby Cranberry Marsh by the end of the period (m.ob.). The only Black-headed Gulls involved one at Niagara-on-the-Lake Apr. 15 and two there Apr. 19 (GBy). Lesser Black-backed Gulls numbered 25 of various ages and were widespread from Pelee to Ottawa. Out-of-range Great Black-backed Gulls were at Moosonee May 2 (SS) and T.C.B.O., May 24 (DBr, PD). Encouraging numbers of Com. Terns included 1400 at Pelee May 11 (AW, JDu) and 500 adults at Toronto's e. headland May 29 (RY).

Given that it was not an incursion winter for n. owls, a Great Gray Owl n. of Picton Mar. 8 (KH, RW) was surprising. A census of owls in the Cochrane area Mar. 31–Apr. 3 tallied 18 calling Boreal Owls (RRu, CD). A & Chuck-will's-widow at Rondeau May 14 was joined by a female May 21 (PAW et al.). The Burpee Twp. Manitoulin male returned for the 3rd consecutive year to its lonely outpost May 19+ (WB et al.). A singing male was heard one morning only near Walsingham May 25 (MK). Of note was a Black-backed Woodpecker well s. of range at Rattray Marsh, Peel Mar. 22–Apr. 11 (DP, m.ob.).

#### Flycatchers to Warblers

Acadian Flycatcher sightings included one record early for the province at Long Pt., Apr. 24 (KM, RD, PR, GN), plus singles at Toronto May 11 (NM); P.E.Pt., May 14 (RDW); London May 17 (SPu); and Pelee May 22-23 (JJ, v.o.). A Least Flycatcher at Pelee Apr. 15 (AW, TD) was record early for the province. A Say's Phoebe at T.C.B.O., May 12 (MH et al.) was outstanding. The W. Kingbird at Pelee May 11 (RD, BC, KM) was record early for the province. Other sightings included one at T.C.B.O., May 24 (MH,DS) and L. of the Woods May 27 (M&DE et al.). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Pelee Apr. 23 (TR) was record early, while one on the Dyer's Bay Rd., Bruce May 22 (WM) was the 4th sighting on that road. Pelee's, and for that matter, Ontario's 4th Fish Crow was identified by 3 independent parties May 5 (J&DWa, WM, G&DL). Carolina Wrens were hard hit in many rural areas of the south by the hard winter but seemed to fare better in urban centers where micro-climates and feeders helped them survive. Single Bewick's Wrens were n. of Hillman Marsh May 13-20 (PW, m.ob.) and Rondeau May 14 (PAW), the first spring records in 2 years. Ten Sedge Wrens accompanied by two Marsh Wrens at T.C.B.O., May 14 were noteworthy. Both species are uncommon in Thunder Bay. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers strengthened their range along the central L. Ontario shoreline e. to Ottawa, while vagrants appeared on Manitoulin I. at both S. Baymouth and Mills Twp., May 15 (CBe) and Mississagi Light May 18 (JN). During a 6-hour evening count at Dorland, Oxford May 24, one observer estimated 3600 Swainson's Thrushes passing overhead (JMH). A Wood Thrush at Learnington Apr. 2 (P&JWn) was record early for the province. The wintering Varied Thrush w. of Guelph remained until Mar. 20 (WWa), while another made a brief appearance at Hope Bay, Bruce Mar. 14 (MBu).

After a heavy winter influx, reports of lingering Bohemian Waxwings in the south were widespread. Notable numbers included a flock of 80 at Colpoy's Bay Mar. 14 (JJo) and 150 at Peter's Corners Mar. 15-23 (CW, v.o.). The last individual was record late at Peterborough May 7 (TB). Loggerhead Shrikes continue to hang tenaciously to Ontario territories. Of 23 birds reported, 22 were from known breeding areas; one at Silver Islet, Thunder Bay Apr. 30- May 2 (NE, v.o.) was exceptional. White-eyed Vireos away from the L. Erie plain included singles at Kingston May 6 (GP); P.E.Pt., May 11–14 (K.F.N.); Thickson's Woods, Durham May 12-16 (m.ob.); and Bronte May 15 (RC). A recordearly for the province Red-eyed Vireo arrived at Pelee Apr. 15 (AW, TD).

April 15 also provided several provincial record arrivals among warblers, including an Orange-crowned, Yellow and Prairie at Pelee (AW), and a Cerulean at L.P.B.O. (JW et al.). Also record early were a Kentucky at Pelee Apr. 17 (TH) and a Blackpoll at Toronto Apr. 21-23 (RY, m.ob.). Three different Lawrence's Warblers were in the Pelee area May 12, 13 & 18 (v.o.). Records of both hybrids of Golden-wingeds and Blue-wingeds have increased in the past decade as the zone of overlap has expanded. A Magnolia Warbler at S. Baymouth Apr. 30 (DBa) was exceptionally early there. A ♂ Black-throated Blue at Pittock L., Oxford May 11 (JMH) exhibited the characters of the subspecies cairnsi, extremely rare in the province. Rondeau's second-ever Townsend's Warbler was present May 8–10 (MK et al.). The nine Yellow-throated Warblers, the most ever in spring, included individuals at L.P.B.O., Apr. 19-27 (PNP et al.), Toronto's Humber Bay Park Apr. 20-22 (RY, m.ob.), Pelee Apr. 25 (TH), nearby Leamington Apr. 26 (P&JWn), Pelee again Apr. 28 (NS), Toronto's Lambton Woods Apr. 28-30 (RY et al.), Pelee Apr. 29 (LC), Comber May 12 (MM, RTa), and finally Pelee May 15 (RSn, RSt, v o.). All of Pelee's sightings were considered different birds, while the two Toronto birds were the dominica subspecies, much rarer for the province. The traditional southern "overshoots" fared very well. Sighting totals included 23 Prothonotary, 22 Worm-eating, and 25 Kentucky warblers. Records of note included Prothonotarys at Cranberry Marsh May 23 (MB, m.ob.) and Pittock L., Oxford May 27 (JMH), a Worm-eating at Goderich Apr. 25 (AM), and Kentuckys at Mississagi Light, Manitoulin May 20 (JN) and PE.Pt., May 29 (RDW). Hooded Warblers continue to consolidate their hold on the south. Extralimitals away from the s. Great Lakes included one at Ottawa May 7 (JHa et al.) and one in the north at T.C.B.O., May 23 (MH, AK et al.).

#### **Tanagers to Finches**

Seven of the 16 Summer Tanager sightings were extralimitals, an excellent total. These included singles at Toronto May 2 (RY); Colpoy's Bay, *Bruce* May 5 (RW, m.ob.); PE.Pt., May 24 (K.F.N.), and an exceptional four birds at T.C.B.O., May 20–23. T.C.B.O. also recorded a Blue Grosbeak May 3 (DS *et al.*), one of only two in the province this spring, the other at Pelee May 18–21 (SPr, R&CM). Stray Dickcissels were at Indian Pt., *Manitoulin* May 23 (RCa, RCl) and L.P.B.O., May 30 (PNP *et al.*). Rufous-sided Towhees well n. of range included one at Algonquin May 7 (RT,

DT) and three at Batchewana Twp., Algoma Apr. 28 (SR). The three Lark Sparrows seen, an outstanding total, included singles at Long Pt., Apr. 27 (SSo); Pelee May 18 (PF et al.); and Pinery P.P., Lambton May 20 (JS). Even rarer were two 3 Lark Buntings, one reported at Forfar May 21 (MR) and the other at Barrie I., Manitoulin May 22 (RCa, RCl). Numbers of Henslow's Sparrows have dropped drastically in the last decade and are now almost totally restricted to spring migrants. Six sightings this year included a record early one for Pelee Apr. 2 (D&GCa); another there Apr. 15 (AW); one record early for L.P.B.O., Apr. 15 (FJ,PNP); one at Pelee I., Apr. 19 (RTy); one near Cheapside May 13 (IM, GP); and one at Pelee May 22 (m.ob.). While now an established fall migrant, a LeConte's Sparrow at Algonquin Apr. 28-May 2 (RH) was noteworthy for the spring. A Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Pelee May 30 (DFr, E&DMa) was notable. Three May reports of Harris' Sparrows were above average for spring. Singles were at Oshawa May 6-7 (BK), w. Toronto May 10-11 (DDu et al.), and Wahnapitae May 15-17 (JFi, HB, CBe). Several Dark-eyed Juncos lingered in the south well into May, the latest at London May 27 (PRe).

An E. Meadowlark banded at T.C.B.O., May 20 was considered rare there. In the south, W. Meadowlarks were found at S. Dumfries Twp., Waterloo Apr. 14 (DEn, NSh); Long Pt., Apr. 22-24 (RK et al.); and Grand Bend May 20 (JS). Notable sightings of Yellow-headed Blackbirds included singles n. of Bolton Apr. 21 (EW) and King City May 6 (J&DHo). A ♀ Brewer's Blackbird at Matachewan Apr. 16-29 (LT) was the first there in several years. Reports of Orchard Orioles were numerous and widespread as far e. as Kingston, but three at Great Duck I., Manitoulin May 22 were surprising (TL, JMc). The wintering Brambling at Hungry Hollow, Lambton was last seen May 15 (AR). After a winter of numerous sightings, the last Pine Grosbeaks in the southwest were 10 seen Apr. 3 at Fisher's Glen, Norfolk (TW, FW). Several reports were received of Com. Redpolls in the south in May, tardy leftovers from the winter invasion. Of the 9 reports of Hoarys during the spring, the most southerly was at Leamington Mar. 19 (TH) while the latest was Apr. 16 on Howe I., Frontenac (SD). Last and perhaps least was a House Sparrow at Algonquin Apr. 18-19 (GL), a species mercifully still rare there.

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