

throat was observed at a Gainesville feeder Feb. 22 (PE), but it did not remain to be seen by more experienced observers. A Snow Bunting, always a good find, was at Wards Bank (Huguenaut), *Duval*, Dec. 2 (RC).

The only Yellow-headed Blackbirds reported were single imm. males in Holiday, *Pasco*, Dec. 30 (PH) and s.w. of Florida City Jan. 11 (PWS, SS *et al.*). The 100 Boat-tailed Grackles at L. Jackson Dec. 3 (GM) was indicative of unusually high winter numbers in n. Florida and s. Georgia (*vide* JiC). Four Bronzed Cowbirds were found on the Lake-land CBC Dec. 17 for the 6th consecutive year (*vide* PF); a male s.w. of Florida City Dec. 24 was the only other reported (PWS, SS, MWh). Two Orchard Oriole were at Belle Glade Marina, *Palm Beach*, a recent wintering site, Feb. 25 (CW, HL *et al.*). Northern Oriole reports include two ♀ "Bullock's" on the East Pasco CBC, *Pasco*, Dec. 20 (BP, PY, DR) but females are hard to distinguish in the field or hand; three "Baltimore" Orioles at Parker I., Jan. 1 (B&LA); ≤12 (six ad. ♂ "Baltimores") at a Tallahassee feeder through the period (NW) and five Northern wintering in Key West (JAO). A ♀ Purple Finch found intermittently in Tallahassee Dec. 20–Feb. 11 (NW) was the only report for the Region. House Finches continue to spread with a male at Cedar Key Jan. 30 (DH) and males singing regularly at 3 locations in Gainesville in February (TW).

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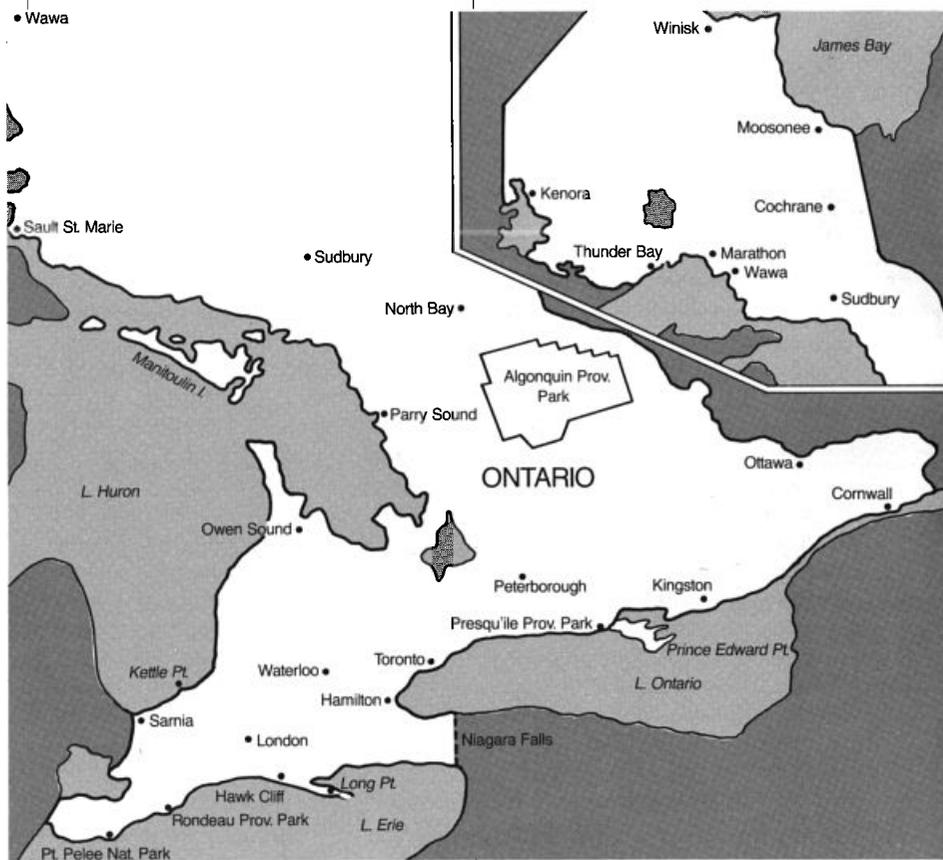
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Ontario Region

RON RIDOUT

After experiencing the winter of 1993–1994, it would not be too much of an exaggeration to describe this past winter as near tropical by comparison. Temperatures in the mid-50s and 60s F. lingered well into December across much of the Region. January temperatures were well above normal and snow accumulations were well below normal. Winter did exert some force in February when temperatures dropped to near normal levels across the Region.

The result was that notable trends did not involve the usual winter species but instead focused on lingering "waterfowl" and passerines that remained well beyond their normal departure dates, often in good number. Outstanding rarities included two separate Ross's Gulls and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches. All rarities mentioned in this report are subject to the approval of the Ontario Bird Records Committee.



Abbreviations: Pelee (*Pt. Pelee Nat'l Park and vicinity*); P.E.Pt. (*Prince Edward Pt.*); Algonquin, Presqu'île and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* refer to counties or regional municipalities.

Loons to Waterfowl

Given the recent increased number of migrant Red-throated Loons on the Great Lakes, it is perhaps not that unexpected that in mild winters the number of observations should increase as well. Sightings included singles at Kettle Pt. (AR) and Boiler Beach Bruce (AM) both Dec. 8, Long Pt., Dec. 17 (DA, LE), Wolfe Is., *Frontenac*, Dec. 18 (RDW), Colpo's Bay, Bruce, Dec. 24 (JJ), and Hamilton Bay Jan. 18 (RC). Notable Com. Loons included a late bird at Huntsville Dec. 22 (RT) and one at Cornwall Jan. 29 (BD). Late sightings of grebes included a Pied-billed at Bobcaygeon Jan. 1 (RP, JJ), a single Horned at Gore Bay Jan. 8 (TL), 33 Horneds on the Wiarton CBC Dec. 18 (m.ob.), single Red-necked at Silver Islet, *Thunder Bay*, Dec. 10 (AH) and N. Bay Dec. 18 (RTa), 525 Red-necked around Manitoulin Is., Dec. 8 (BS), and a lone Eared at Baie du Dor, Bruce Dec. 4 (AM).

Three different N. Fulmars were exceptional. These included one which sat on a front lawn in Limoges Dec. 14–16 before it was captured, rehabbed, and returned to the Atlantic off Nova Scotia (BD). Two were at Cornwall Dec. 15–16 (BD, RH) when one was found dead. The 2nd was last seen Dec. 17. Cornwall also hosted two N. Gannets Dec. 15 (BD). A 3rd bird was seen over Dundas Dec. 30 (JH). A late Am. Bittern was seen at Pelee Dec. 2 (TH). One of the latest ever Great Egrets was seen Dec. 28 near the Thames R. mouth (*vide* PAW). Individual Black-crowned Night-Herons tarried at Kleinburg Dec. 6 (GB) and Hamilton Dec. 26 (DG, WS).

The annual L. Ontario Mid-winter Waterfowl Inventory Jan. 8 recorded 135,541 birds of 32 species (WE). The record-high number was indicative of the warm season and an abundant food supply (*i.e.* Zebra Mussels) for certain species. Of interest is the shift in numbers to the e. end of the lake as the mussel numbers explode in that area and drop in the w. end. Leading species totals included 26,826 Oldsquaw, 26,380 Canada Geese, 21,421 Greater Scaup, 15,967 Mallard, and 15,370 Com. Goldeneye. With the recent mild winters (1993–1994 excepted), Tundra Swans have begun to overwinter in s.w. Ontario. With a period high of 5800 birds at Long Pt., Dec. 6, at least 700 remained there through the winter (RK). Sightings of Greater White-fronted Geese included one at Pittock L., *Oxford*, Dec. 8–Feb. 12 (JMH *et al.*) and 15 at Ham-

ilton Feb. 18+ (KM *et al.*). A Ross's Goose in *Lambton* Dec. 4 (RTy) provided the 5th sighting in s. Ontario in 1994. A late Brant was at Presqu'île the same day (SH) while a Canada Goose at Atikokan Dec. 1 (DaE) was record late there. Highest numbers of wintering ducks included 10 Wood Ducks at Taquanyah C.A., *Haldimand*, Jan. 14 (RD, BC), 2500 Canvasbacks at Long Pt., Jan. 28 (RC), 2000 Redheads there Jan. 30 (BJ), 925 Redheads at Presqu'île Jan. 25 (SB, KC), 10,000 Greater Scaup at Hamilton Jan. 8 (RC, JO), and 12,500 White-winged Scoters at P.E.Pt., Jan. 9 (JE, RDW). A warm spell in mid-February initiated the first arriving waterfowl. Early sightings included a Ring-necked Duck and Hooded Merganser at Cornwall Feb. 13 (BD), a N. Pintail at Whitby Feb. 14 (m.ob.), two Green-winged Teal at Ottawa Feb. 17 (BD), two Ruddy Ducks at Hamilton Feb. 18 (RC), and an Am. Wigeon at Dorland Feb. 23 (JMH). Unusual waterfowl included lone Tufted Ducks at Hamilton Jan. 8–Feb. 4 (RC, JO) and Sombra Jan. 18+ (RTy), nine King Eiders—seven of which were along L. Ontario, with two at Pelee Dec. 2 (KM, WL), 20 different Harlequin Ducks with the most unusual locations including Owen Sound Dec. 13–24 (DTa, BF *et al.*) and Cyprus L., Bruce, Dec. 21 (MW,DF), and eight different Barrow's Goldeneyes along L. Ontario and the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers.

Raptors to Shorebirds

A total of 31 Turkey Vultures was indicative of the mild weather. While 16 of those were from one late migrant group at Hawk Cliff Dec. 3 (RD, BC), several were seen in the south in January and February, indicating that they attempted and likely were successful in overwintering. Bald Eagle sightings numbered 116 (near normal), 53 of which were along the St. Lawrence R. from Ivy Lea to Brockville in January (KR). A Red-shouldered Hawk at Duclos Pt., Dec. 9 (JM,SM) was unusual for the date. A well-studied Swainson's Hawk at Hawk Cliff Dec. 8 (MF) would be an excellent record anywhere in N. America at that date, doubly so in Ontario. Interesting subspecies of Red-taileds included separate *calurus* (both rufous) at N. Woodslee Dec. 1 (KM, WL) and Paris Dec. 24 (WL) and a Krider's at Blenheim Feb. 20–28 (SC). A Red-tailed at Algonquin Feb. 27 (DSt) furnished a rare winter record there. Golden Eagle sightings numbered 15, most in c. Ontario, while one at Namakan L., Feb. 7 (TN) provided *Rainy River's* first winter record. Considered a rare winter resident, Merlin sightings totaled 16, with one as far north as Thunder Bay Jan. 13 (NE). Individual Peregrines were at London

and Ottawa throughout the winter (m.ob.), Toronto Dec. 8 (RF), and Hillman Marsh *Essex* Dec. 19 (TH), while three were seen at Toronto Jan. 7 (NM). Four different Gyrfalcons spent time at Thunder Bay during the winter (m.ob.), while one wintered at Sault Ste. Marie (EC *et al.*), and a white bird was observed at Copper Cliff Feb. 18 (RM).

High counts of Am. Coots included 155 at Hamilton Jan. 22 (KM, WL), 650 at Shrewsbury Dec. 18 (AW, MJ) and 3080 at Long Pt., Dec. 6 (RK). Sandhill Crane numbers peaked at 12 at Long Pt., Dec. 22 (JMi), while one at Whitby Dec. 31 and Jan. 7–14 (CM, v.o.) was unusual there. An Am. Golden-Plover at Pelee Dec. 1–4 (WS, JD *et al.*) was record late there. Other late shorebirds included single Greater Yellowlegs at Matachewan Dec. 1 (LT), Hamilton (KM, v.o.) and Richmond Hill (GB) both Dec. 7, and two at Pelee Dec. 19 (G&PG, KBo), three Lesser Yellowlegs at Hamilton Dec. 4 (KM, v.o.), one at Pittock L. the same day (JMH), a Sanderling at Presqu'île Dec. 22 (SH), a Least Sandpiper remaining at Pelee from the fall period until Dec. 11 (AW), a Pectoral Sandpiper at Kingston Dec. 10 (KH, RW), and an Am. Woodcock at St. Williams Jan. 9 (RR). Single Purple Sandpipers were observed at Fifty Pt., *Niagara*, Dec. 4 (SMa), Kettle Pt., Dec. 7 (AR), and Pelee Dec. 10 (AW). Three birds remained at Niagara Falls until Feb. 19 (m.ob.), while 12 were counted at Presqu'île Dec. 1 (RB). A record early Killdeer arrived at Ottawa Feb. 19 (JHa).

Jaegers to Woodpeckers

The only jaeger of the period was identified as a Parasitic Dec. 10 at Kettle Pt. (AR). Little Gull sightings totaled 28 provincially with some duplication likely along the Niagara R. Eleven birds there Jan. 29 (GBe) was a good number for the date. Six birds on L. Simcoe at Pefferlaw Cr., Dec. 9 (JM *et al.*) was a high number for the location. The only Black-headed Gull was at Woodstock Dec. 17 (JMH), *Oxford's* first record. For the 3rd consecutive year a California Gull was sighted on the Niagara R. This year's individual was a 2nd-winter bird observed Dec. 3 (CS, RFr). Impressive totals of Herring Gulls included 3000 at Ottawa Dec. 31 (BD), 2450 at Cornwall Jan. 20 (BD), and 5000 at Wildwood L., *Oxford*, Feb. 4 (JMH). Lesser Black-backed Gull sightings totaled 20, all in the south. Most notable were five birds at the Maple landfill Jan. 1 (GB). High counts of Glaucous Gulls included 68 at Ottawa (BD), 39 at Sudbury (CB), and 35 at Hamilton (MS, v.o.) all Dec. 31. Outstanding totals of Great Black-backed involved 1725 at Ottawa Dec. 18 (BD), 2450 at Cornwall Jan. 9 (BD), 117 at Guelph Dec. 17 (MC), and 60 at Wildwood



Adult Ross's Gull at Port Weller, Ontario, February 24, 1995. Remarkably, this was the second individual to be found at this location during the season. Photograph/Kayo Roy.

L., Jan. 1 (JMH), the latter two excellent counts for inland locations. Lone Black-legged Kittiwakes were at Port Colborne Jan. 2 (WD) and Hamilton Jan. 14 (RDa), both very late records. **Ross' Gull** sightings totaled 2 for the period! The first was discovered Dec. 18 at Port Weller, *Niagara* (RD, KM, BC). A careful search the next day by dozens of frustrated observers revealed a pile of pink feathers surrounded by the tracks of a nocturnal avian predator. The 2nd bird appeared at exactly the same location Feb. 26 (DM, RB, m.ob.) and fared better than its predecessor, remaining until Mar. 1. A Forster's Tern at Pelee Dec. 3 (DM, RB) was record late there.

The discovery of a dead Barn Owl in suitable habitat e. of Windsor Dec. 27 (*fide* PAW) might indicate that the species still maintains a talon-hold in the province. Snowy Owl reports were widely scattered though generally very scarce. Reports of Great Grays involved singles at Kagawong Dec. 20 and Gore Bay Dec. 21 (BT), and along Hwy. 60 in Algonquin Feb. 17 (LL, RS *et al.*). Two Long-Eareds at Nolan's Flats, *Manitoulin*, Feb. 13 (DB, TL) were a surprise at that location, as was a N. Saw-whet at nearby LaCloche I., Jan. 15 (L&DB). A Belted Kingfisher near Virginiatown Dec. 17 (LT, PR) was extremely late that far north. Also well north was a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Marathon Dec. 18 (NE, WCI) and three different birds in Thunder Bay Dec. 26 and Jan. 7 (EA, DW, JL). One lasted through the period. Black-backed Woodpeckers s. of range involved lone birds at Long Sault C.A., *Durham*, Jan. 22 (EAL, JF), Kortright C.A., *York*, Feb. 8 (DS, GB), and Optimist Bog, *Waterloo*, Feb. 23 (KBr). A N. Flicker was well n. at Thunder Bay Jan. 15 (BM).

Flycatchers to Waxwings

Any empidonax flycatcher at Thunder Bay in December is mind boggling. One there Dec. 26 was believed to be either a Dusky or Ham-

mond's (JHo, DBm). The two outstanding flycatchers from the fall season lingered into the winter. The Say's Phoebe at Cressy Pt., *Prince Edward* remained until Jan. 8 (m.ob.) while the Vermilion Flycatcher at St. Clair N.W.A., *Kent*, was last seen Dec. 9 (JHn). The first returning Horned Larks were six early individuals flying N over Pelee Jan. 13 (AW). Five *hoyti* Horned Larks were found among *praticola* and *alpestris* at Long Pt., Jan. 28 (RC). *Hoyti* is the rarest of the 3 subspecies found in s. Ontario in winter. A very late Barn Swallow was discovered at the Walkerton sewage lagoons Dec. 17 (DN), while a Gray Jay at Colpoys Bay, *Bruce*, Dec. 18 (RWe) was s. of range. Sightings of Tufted Titmice included one at Brantford Dec. 17 (WL), a pair near Selkirk Jan. 28 (J&RG), one at Cambridge Feb. 19 (WW *et al.*), and two at Kettle Pt. Feb. 25 (AR). Lone late House Wrens were found at St. Williams Dec. 17 (AW, MJ), Erieau Dec. 18 (AW), and Windsor Jan. 1 (SP).

Single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers lingered to Dec. 2 at Pelee (WS, JD) and Dec. 18 at Niagara Falls (RB). Rare thrushes included a Mt. Bluebird at Curve L., *Peterborough* from late November–Dec. 22 (DSa *et al.*), two more at Wheatley P.P., Dec. 19+ (MJ, v.o.), single Townsend's Solitaires at Thunder Bay Dec. 26–early January (AH) and Belleville Dec. 31 and Jan. 16 (JB, SB), and an exceedingly late Swainson's Thrush at Mindemoya Dec. 17–18 (CW, CB). A Hermit Thrush at Thunder Bay Dec. 3 (BM, Av) was record late there. Observations of Varied Thrush involved singles at Atikokan Dec. 29–Feb. 19 (DE), Bourget Jan. 7 (GM), Orillia Jan. 15 (*fide* JFo), Kanata Jan. 19–Feb. 28 (JS), and Queensville Jan. 28–Feb. 28 (M&HSu). The most northerly of six Gray Catbirds reported was at Meaford Dec. 3–Feb. 2 (JBa). Two Brown Thrashers remained at Thunder Bay until Jan. 4 (m.ob.), very unusual that far north. Single Am. Pipits at Toronto Jan. 8 (AD) and Fisherville Feb. 4 (JMi) were very unusual for the dates. Bohemian Waxwings were thinly scattered, with one at Guelph Feb. 23 (JS) the farthest south.

Vireos to Finches

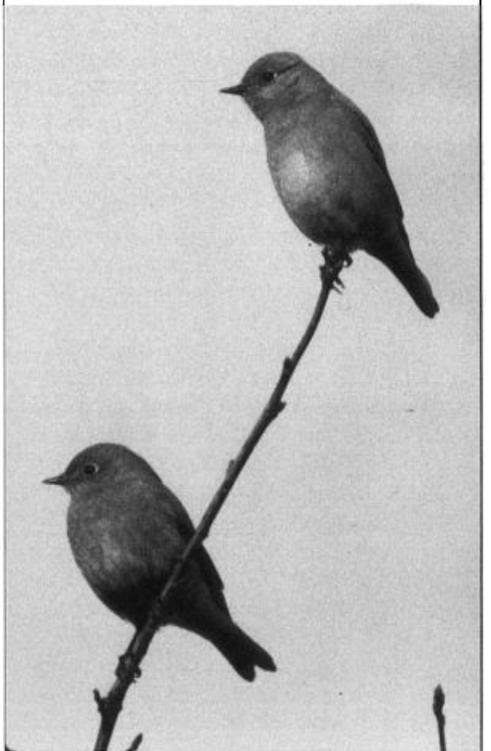
Two different White-eyed Vireos were at Pelee: one Dec. 4 (G&DL), and the other Dec. 1–Jan. 1 (RKu, v.o.), which set a record-late date for the province. A Solitary Vireo at Turkey Pt., Dec. 17 (GGi) furnished one of the few winter records of this species for the province. Late warblers included an Orange-crowned near St. Williams Dec. 17 (AW, MJ); a Nashville at Pelee Dec. 2 (WS, JD); single Cape Mays at King City Dec. 2 (THo, CH), Rondeau Dec. 4 (KB, JB), and Sault Ste. Marie Dec. 10 (TW, v.o.); a Yellow-



Lingering from fall was this Say's Phoebe photographed December 27, 1994, at Cressy Point, Ontario. Photograph/Alan Wormington.

rumped at Atikokan Dec. 3–Jan. 15 (DE); a Pine at Thornhill Dec. 27 (WE); single Am. Redstarts at Port Burwell Dec. 3 (DM, LW) and Niagara Falls Dec. 18 (RB); separate Ovenbirds at Toronto Dec. 1 (PSS) and Dec. 2 (SPr) and Pelee Dec. 4 (G&DL); and a Yellow-breasted Chat at St. Catharines Dec. 8 (FB, KR).

What seems to be Ontario's annual Summer Tanager at a feeder in December turned up at Oshawa Dec. 10–11 (KRi, m.ob.). Northern Cardinals at feeders in the north included a male at Moosonee Dec. 1+ (EH), and a female at Thunder Bay Dec. 26+ (DEL, JL) was joined by a male Feb. 16 (MH). Most surprising was a ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak found at Peterborough Jan. 14



Two female Mountain Bluebirds together at Wheatley Provincial Park, Ontario, December 20, 1994. Photograph/Alan Wormington.

(DAL). Observations of Am. Tree Sparrows still in the north included one at Atikokan Dec. 18 (DGr) and three at Matachewan Jan. 7 (LT). Lingering individual Chipping Sparrows occurred at Toronto Dec. 3 (NM), Leamington Dec. 19 (AW), Walpole Twp., *Haldimand*, Jan. 10 (JD, WS), and, most amazingly, at Dwight Feb. 5–19 (RT, DT). A Song Sparrow at Cochrane Jan. 7 (DP, EK) was record late for that n. town. The latest Lincoln's Sparrow of the fall migration was found at Pelee Dec. 1 (TH). Very high numbers of White-crowned Sparrows on CBCs included 67 at Blenheim Dec. 18 (AW, MJ) and 184 at Pelee Dec. 19 (m.ob.). One at Thunder Bay Jan. 22 (ND) provided a very rare winter record there. Harris's Sparrow sightings totaled four. Individuals occurred at Thunder Bay Dec. 1–late January (DMu), Cache Bay mid-December+ (RTa), Keyser Jan. 7+ (PC, v.o.), and Selby Feb. 2–28 (D&JHs). Lone Dark-eyed Juncos were observed in the north at Atikokan Dec. 28 (DE), Kenogami Jan. 20 (HL), and n. of Barry's Bay Feb. 5 (WC, C&DH). The Atikokan bird was the *oreganus* subspecies.

Fifty E. Meadowlarks at Fisherville Jan. 28 was a high number for the date (JMi *et al.*). Eighty Rusty Blackbirds and 70 Brown-headed Cowbirds at Pelee Feb. 23 (AW) heralded the arrival of spring in Canada's "deep south." Single Rustys at Espanola Dec. 31 (PRo, KS) and St. Mary's I., *Algoma*, Feb. 18 (RCo, EC *et al.*) were well n. of normal wintering range, as was a Brewer's Blackbird at Indian Pt., *Manitoulin*, Jan. 7 (DB, TL). It

seems that good things came in twos during the winter season. Two different **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** were discovered, one at Thunder Bay Dec. 28–Jan. 11 (BH, m.ob.), the other at Sapawe Jan. 22+ (M&DE). House Finches established themselves ever farther north with a female at Marathon Dec. 6–7 (KW) and two at Nipigon Dec. 17 (I&GE). Winter finches were thinly scattered mainly in c. and n. regions. Algonquin reported the best numbers with 3527 Red and 2490 White-winged crossbills and 4049 Pine Siskins Dec. 31 (m.ob.). After last winter's invasion, concentrations of Com. Redpolls were few and far between. A flock of 100 at London Dec. 10 (TB) was noteworthy as the largest number in the south. The only Hoarys were single observations at Red Rock Dec. 17 (NE, SPh, BA) and Thunder Bay Dec. 31 (NE *et al.*). Several n. reporters mentioned higher-than-normal numbers of Am. Goldfinches throughout the winter, indicative of the mild winter.

Addendum

NASFN 48:940: Videotape of the hummingbird at Koshlong L., *Haliburton*, July 2–3 was inconclusive as to its identity. The bird remains officially unidentified.

Corrigenda

NASFN 48:204: Correct the date of the four N. Shovelers at Wheatley to Feb. 24–25. *NASFN* 48:293: add to the dates of the Eur. Wigeon at Hillman Marsh Apr. 22–24. *NASFN* 48:294: add to the dates of the sepa-

rate Willlets at Pelee May 11–12 and May 15–16, and credit the 2nd observation to DMm (D. Milsom). *AB* 48:294: credit the W. Sandpiper at Hillman Marsh May 13–16 to JDu (J. Dunn).

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One of two Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches in Ontario this season was this bird at Sapawe during January and February 1995. Photograph/Dave Elder.