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Quebec Region

Y. AUBRY AND P. BANNON

Summer 1995 was hot and dry throughout most of the province except the extreme southern part, where the rainfall in July was slightly above normal. The hot weather was felt everywhere, even in the Gaspé Peninsula, where temperatures in the 90s° F were not uncommon. Although the nice weather was much welcomed by vacationers, farmers were adversely affected, especially in the south, where in June Montreal recorded 18 consecutive days without rain. The most serious problems, however, occurred in the Gaspé Peninsula, where forest fires raged for much of the summer, destroying large tracks of forest. At first glance, the drought had no negative impact on the nesting success of most species.

And, finally, the number of rarities reported in July in eastern Quebec was impressive, particularly in the Magdalen Islands and in the Gaspé Peninsula.

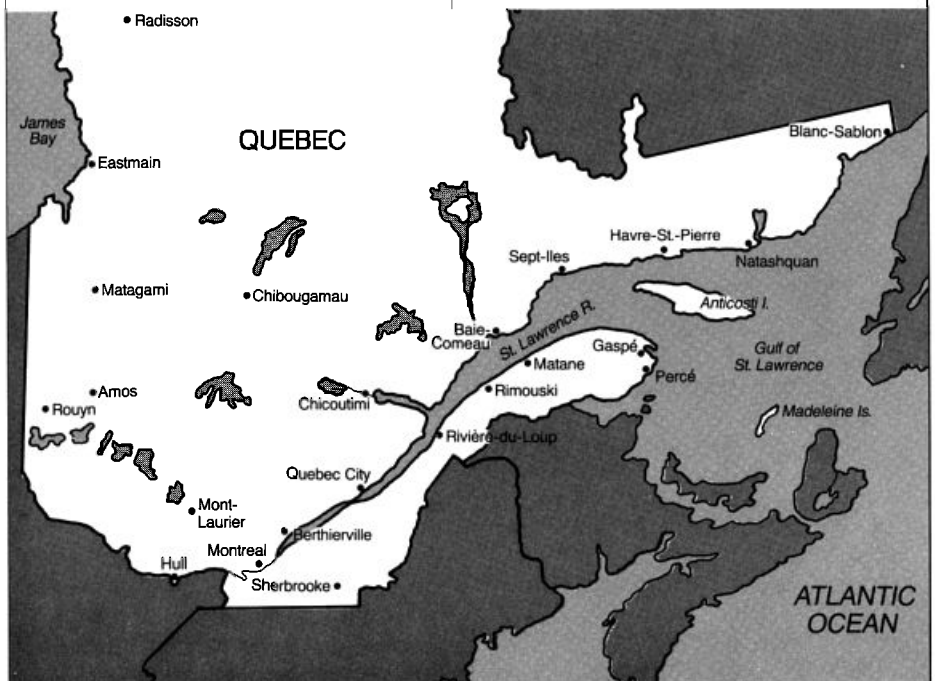
Loons to Waterfowl

Large numbers of non-breeding Red-throated Loons wandered upstream into the St. Lawrence R. estuary, where 93 were counted at Rivière-Ouelle, *Kamouraska*, July 7 (CA). The discovery of an Arctic/Pa-

cific Loon in alternate plumage at L'Anse-Pleureuse, *Gaspé*, July 23 was a notable event (RF).

A count of six N. Fulmars July 17 in the Sainte-Marie Archipelago along the Lower North Shore was noteworthy (CN). Since 1972, the Manx Shearwater has been recorded in small numbers almost annually in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and/or in the estuary, mainly during ferry crossings. The Sainte-Marie Archipelago seems to be an attractive site for this species. From only a single bird seen there in July 1989 during a Canadian Wildlife Service survey of seabird colonies, the number rose to seven in 1990 and a remarkable 41 this year tallied between July 17–Aug. 4, including 15 July 21 (CN). It would certainly be interesting to investigate this area in the near future for the possibility of local breeding. Three Manx Shearwaters were also seen from the ferry between Rivière-au-Renard and Anticosti I., July 30 (AC). Both Wilson's and Leach's storm-petrels were regularly observed in small numbers from the above-mentioned ferry and also in the Magdalen Is. in July (m.ob.). An ad. Great Cormorant in basic plumage strayed upstream on the St. Lawrence R. to reach Rivière-Ouelle June 15 (CA).

The Least Bittern is making more and more incursions into the Lower St. Lawrence region: A bird was heard and seen from June 1–July 4 at L. Macpès, *Rimouski* (Y. Gauthier *et al.*), one was at Saint-Anaclet, *Rimouski*, July 20 (GG *et al.*), and a pair was discovered at L. à L'Anguille, *Rimouski*, July 29 (R. Saint-Laurent). A Tricolored Heron lingering from spring was still at Barachois, *Gaspé*, June 1, but moved to



Chandler by June 4 (PP *et al.*). A Green Heron at Coin-du-Banc, *Gaspé*, July 13 represented a rare local occurrence (G. Zenaitis). Intriguing was the reappearance of Whooper Swans in e. Quebec: Two subadults brightened L. Saint-Georges on Anticosti I., June 11–16 (D. Morin, J. Schell, L. Gagnon).

More and more Mute Swans visited the shorelines of the St. Lawrence R. during the summer: The five individuals reported in the spring report spent June at Cacouna and then moved W to be seen at La Malbaie, *Charlevoix*, June 27–July 8 (A. Boucher, RL), at Saint-Vallier, *Bellechasse*, July 16–23 (A. Rasmussen, J. Laporte), and at I.-aux-Grues, *Montmagny*, July 29 (PL). Moreover, three individuals were recorded at Notre-Dame de Pierreville, *Yamaska*, June 22–23 (DJ, m.ob.) and six at Saint-Sulpice, *L'Assomption*, in late July (S. Dubreuil). Are these birds all escapes from captivity or feral birds wandering from breeding sites located in Ontario or in the United States? If so, it may not be long before this species colonizes the province.

The Barnacle Goose seen at Dundee, *Huntingdon*, in early June was almost certainly an escape (*vide* J. Brisson). Summering Eur. Wigeons are now the norm in the Montreal area: Two spent June at LaSalle (PB, m.ob.), one was at Côte Sainte-Catherine in early June (*vide* PB), and one at Longueuil July 2 (DD *et al.*). Noteworthy was a mixed flock of 8000 non-breeding Surf and White-winged scoters at Forestville, *Saguenay*, July 12 (MR, CM); breeding of the former was suggested at L. Jalobert, n. of Chicoutimi, by the presence of a pair in suitable habitat throughout June (D. Simard, M.C. Fraser). A Com. Eider inland at Saint-Joseph, *Beauce*, July 20 was quite unexpected (PL, JM).

Raptors to Gulls

Turkey Vultures were again present in the L. Saint-Jean region and in e. Quebec, the easternmost individual appearing n. of Bonaventure, *Gaspé*, June 18 (JMP). In the south, nests were found at 3 locations: Mt. Saint-Bruno, Mt. Yamaska, and Mt. Saint-Hilaire (FM). An ad. Black Vulture was observed in flight and eating woodchuck carrion at Rivière-Malbaie, *Charlevoix*, July 29 (RL, m.ob.). This observation represented the first summer record for the Region. A pair of the Endangered Cooper's Hawk nested on Mt. Yamaska (FM). Completely unexpected was a well-observed dark-morph Broad-winged Hawk at L. Mékinac, *Lavolette*, June 18 (RG). This appears to be the first report of this morph in the province. A Gray Partridge with young at Saint-Narcisse July 12 represented a rare sighting for *Lotbinière* (PL, JM).

The same was true for a family group of Spruce Grouse seen at nearby Saint-Patrice June 22 (J.F. Rousseau).

SA For a 3rd consecutive year, biologists from the Canadian Wildlife Service studied breeding Yellow Rails in s. Quebec, mainly along the St. Lawrence R. corridor. From May 16–July 31, 45 rails (all males) were banded: eight at Dundee, 26 at Île aux Grues, one at La Pocatière, two at Cacouna, three at Pointe-aux-Outardes, three at Saint-Fulgence (along the Saguenay R.), and two at Saint-Gédéon (L. Saint-Jean). The individual banded at La Pocatière remained there from May 25–July 14; afterwards, it moved to Île aux Grues (about 50 km upstream), where it was recaptured July 21. Further, five rails banded in 1994 (see *FN 48 (5): 921*) were recaptured: one at Dundee and four at Île aux Grues. From those recaptured at Île aux Grues, three had been banded there, while one had been banded at Cacouna, 125 km downstream. None of the 21 rails banded in 1993 (see *AB 47 (5): 1087*) were recaptured this year. As in 1994, nests were discovered at Île aux Grues: 2, each containing 9 eggs, were found in June with the aid of a pointing dog. Moreover, collaborators informed us that ≤three birds were heard calling at Ruisseau Antoine (Abitibi) during June and July, an inland locality where the species had been recorded in 1984, and that ≤two individuals were also heard at Cap Tourmente in June and July. Finally, singles were heard calling at Colombiers July 24, and at Sept-Îles July 30 (MR, CM, P. Laporte *et al.*).

Sandhill Cranes wandering outside of their range included three at La Baie, *Chicoutimi*, June 3–4 (L. Tremblay); singles at Pointe-au-Père, *Rimouski*, June 7 (A. Brisson); Cap d'Espoir, *Gaspé*, June 11–13 (J. Brion, J. Wiseman *et al.*); L. Mitshisso (49°47'N, 73°50'W), 125 km northwest of L. Saint-Jean, June 15 (LI, FG); Mont-Laurier, *Labelle*, June 20 (*vide* R. Lebrun); two at I. du Grand Calumet, *Pontiac*, June 25 (*vide* MA); and, finally, one at Bergeronnes July 7+ (N. Boulianne).

Was it simply a curious coincidence or was there a common factor responsible for the simultaneous appearance of lone American Oystercatchers June 22 at Fatima, *Magdalen Is.*, (DGG, C. Phaneuf) and at Notre-Dame de Pierreville (DJ), 2 localities 900 km apart? There were only 4 previous records in the Region. Single Willets were encountered at I.

aux Cochons, *Magdalen Is.* (FS, AR), and at Pointe-au-Père July 1 (DG, J. Lac). A Whimbrel at I. aux Oies, *Montmagny*, June 29 (MR, CM, PL) and a Hudsonian Godwit at La Baie July 8 (H. Simard) were both early southbound migrants, while two Marbled Godwits at Pointe-au-Père June 13 provided a rare occurrence locally (JMB, G. Rioux). Without doubt, the bird of the season was an alternate-plumaged Red-necked Stint well studied at Fatima July 16, providing the first provincial record. The description left no doubt about the identity of the bird (DJ, m.ob.). A Purple Sandpiper lingered at I. aux Basques, *Rivière-du-Loup*, until June 4 (J.L. Martel *et al.*). Two breeding-plumaged Curlew Sandpipers enlightened e. Quebec birders; one was at Havre-aux-Basques, *Magdalen Is.*, June 17–21 (DJ, FS *et al.*), the other at Barachois July 23 (RF). There are about a dozen previous records in the Region. Other unusual shorebird reports included a very early Stilt Sandpiper at Sainte-Flavie, *Rimouski*, June 18 (DG, J. Lac), single Ruffs at Rivière-du-Loup July 25 (JPO) and Montmagny July 27 (J. Lac), and an early Red-necked Phalarope at Saint-Hyacinthe, July 15 (NR).

Laughing Gulls sightings were above average, with single adults at La Pocatière, *Kamouraska*, June 3 (CA), Les Escoumins, *Saguenay*, June 5 (GB), Pointe-aux-Loups, *Magdalen Is.*, June 12, (FS, AR), at Pointe-Label July 7 (GB), Pointe-au-Père July 17–19 (J. Lac, JRP), and Cacouna July 25 (JPO). Deschênes, *Hull*, hosted 2 ad. and one sub-ad. Franklin's Gulls June 11 (M Gawn). Little Gulls were scarce, with two first-summer individuals at LaSalle June 7 (PB, RG) and one at Saint-Gédéon, *L. Saint-Jean*, July 15–31 (CC *et al.*). Common Black-headed Gulls maintained their presence in the Magdalen Is. with a total of nine adults counted, including three sitting on nests in Havre-aux-Basques June 2 (FS). Vagrants were also recorded at Port Saint-François, *Nicolet*, in late July (J. Ducharme) and at Pointe-au-Père July 19–25 (J. Lac, JRP). A first-summer Mew Gull of the Eur race at Saint-Ulric, *Matane*, (FGr) and a 2nd-summer bird of the w. race at Tartigou, *Matane* (FGr), represented the first summer records for the Region. Summering Lesser Black-backed Gulls continued to increase, with eight birds recorded: a 2nd-summer bird at Saint-Irénée, *Charlevoix*, June 4 (J Lac), an adult at La Malbaie June 6 (AC), a 2nd-summer bird at LaSalle June 8 (PB), three different birds at Matane June 6–July 7 (PF, JPO), an adult at LaSalle (RG, PB, L D'Amour), and a first-summer bird at Saint-Gédéon July 19 (CC, GS). Quebec's 3rd Slaty-backed Gull in less than 2 years was an adult in alternate plumage at Matane June

26–July 5 (JPO, M. Lafleur, GG, J. Lac, †). A pair of Great Black-backed Gulls nested at L. Kénogami, L. Saint-Jean, a rare inland occurrence (G. Lupien, R. Tremblay). An ad. Ross' Gull at Bergeronnes, Saguenay, June 11 represented our 3rd Regional record (A. Bouchard, †).

— Almost upstaging the Rufous-necked Stint as the bird of the season was an ad. Gull-billed Tern present in Havre-aux-Basques July 20–22 (DGG, S. Denault), also furnishing a first Regional record. Caspian Terns appeared at several locations in July, especially along the Upper St. Lawrence. A pair was seen mating at Hull July 5 (MA). Encouraging numbers of Black Terns were observed, including 500 at Beauharnois July 30 (PB).

Cuckoos to Shrikes

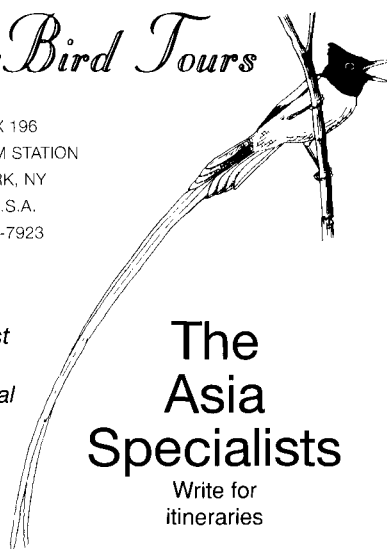
Black-billed Cuckoos were present in above-average numbers in the province, particularly in the L. Saint-Jean region, where 44 birds were heard calling at night in July surveys for Long-eared Owls. Last year only one bird was heard during such surveys (BD *et al.*). A Snowy Owl at Bergeronnes July 13 was termed unseasonable. The discovery of a substantial population of Long-eared Owls breeding in the Saguenay/L.-Saint-Jean region last year was not an event of transient nature, as shown by the number of young detected again this year. Between July 15–Sept. 1, a count of 27 families was obtained, using the method of listening for juvenile's calls along roadsides at night in mixed farmland and forested habitats (BD, C. Girard, M. Savard). As in 1994 (*Québec Oiseaux* 6 (4): 12–15), the distance between families varied from 1–6 km, depending on the geographic region. Mean productivity was significantly higher this summer than last: 2.8 ± 0.9 juveniles/family [$N = 27$] and 2.1 ± 1.0 juv./fam. [$N = 37$], respectively. According to ornithologists in Finland, long-term studies have indicated that Long-eared Owl populations greatly fluctuate in a 3–5 year cycle; this needs to be verified in n.e. North America. Two Boreal Owls calling at L. Dalcourt (49°53'N, 73°09'W) June 10, and another one heard at a more s. station (49°47'N, 72°41'W) June 8, delighted the observers at work in this remote area (LI, FG).

— A Red-bellied Woodpecker was discovered at Longueuil June 14 (P. Wery) and one reappeared at Saint-Armand, *Missisquoi*, in late July (K. Kaiser). This species could conceivably be the next added to the list of breeding birds of Quebec. Two nests of the rare Red-headed Woodpecker were found: one at their traditional site at Breckenridge, *Outaouais*, June 18 (R. Fuoco) and the other at Saint-Armand, *Missisquoi*, in early June (PF). Two Willow Flycatchers were singing

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Andaman Is., Madras
5–27 January

SRI LANKA

27 January–12 February

PHILIPPINES

Luzon, Mindanao, Cebu,
Palawan, Bohol
2 February–4 March

BHUTAN

26 April–19 May

MANCHURIA/ INNER MONGOLIA

20 May–14 June

MALAYSIA

Malaya, Borneo (Mt. Kinabalu)
30 June–21 July

at Pointe-au-Père June 4–July 16 (A. Brisson), a rare event for the Lower St. Lawrence region. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher was seen at L. Saint-Georges, Anticosti I., July 16–18, only a few km from the site where one was observed in September–October 1988 (R. Gingras, J. Lac, A. Maltais, †). This represents the 4th provincial record. The Purple Martin continued to show signs of decline at the n. edge of its range, from Quebec City eastward. On July 7, a long-awaited event occurred: A pair of Tufted Titmice and three young were found at Saint-Armand (JGP). This represents the first confirmed breeding record in the province. A singing House Wren was observed at La Pocatière July 14–24 (CA), while 2–3 pairs nested at the Cap Tourmente N.W.A. This species was also reported in larger number than usual in the Quebec City region, where in the past it was rarely recorded (*fide* LM). Three Sedge Wrens were discovered at Frelighsburg, *Missisquoi*, in early July (JMB, JGP).

— The E. Bluebird had a very good breeding season, particularly in the Gaspé Pen., where nesting was confirmed at Pabos (R. and G. Giroux), Pabos Mills (J.M. Smith), Grande-Vallée (J.C. Côté), Carleton (R. Caissey), Bonaventure (JMP), and New-Carlisle (PP). This species was also reported from the

boreal region, where five birds were observed in a 13-year-old burned area, L. Desautels (49°30'N, 73°22'W), June 16–25, while singles were observed at L. Mitshisso June 29, and at Myrica Camp (49°43'N, 73°20'W) June 3 (LI, FG). This report and an earlier one (see AB 42:1272) confirms that clearcuts and burned-over areas in the boreal forests can prove to be a good habitat for this species and, consequently, the species may not be as dependent on nest boxes in these areas as it is in the south. A Gray Catbird was found at Dune-du-Nord, *Magdalen Is.*, July 1 (AR), while four Brown Thrashers were observed at Saint-Eusèbe, *Témiscouata*, June 18 (MB). Northern Mockingbirds bred n. of their usual range at several localities in the Gaspé Pen., including Grande-Rivière, Chandler, and Caplan (*fide* PP), and also at Pointe-au-Père (M. Bourgeois, *fide* L. Masson) and Jonquière, *Chicoutimi*, (H. Blackburn, S. Violette). Singles were also reported at Bonaventure (D. Gagné) and Shigawake, Gaspé Pen. (PP). A Loggerhead Shrike was carefully observed at Pabos Mills, *Gaspé*, June 1 (J.-M. Smith, †).

Vireos to Finches

Six pairs of Yellow-throated Vireo on Mt. Yamaska throughout the summer were re-

markable (FM). A Blue-winged Warbler was singing at Frelighsburg June 28–July 1 (RG, m.ob.). Two Connecticut Warblers were observed near Myrica Camp in mixed poplar-spruce stands June 2, while two other individuals were located at L. Mithisso in Black Spruce bogs June 12 (LI, FG). A molting Summer Tanager was found at Lorbinère June 21 (F. Gérardin, †). The Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported from Port-Menier, *Anticosti I.*, June 5 (*vide* D. Morin), while a Indigo Bunting sighted at Saint-Eusèbe June 13 (MB) was e. of its usual range.

Clay-colored Sparrow sightings included singles near L. Abitibi in late June (S. Bérubé *et al.*) and L'Ascension, *Saguenay*, June 27–July 3 (S. Boivin), and two at Saint-Honoré, *Saguenay*, throughout the summer (*vide* GS). A male present at La Pocatière May 22–June 23 was singing like a Chipping Sparrow and was paired with a female of the latter species; their nest, which contained one cowbird egg in addition to 2 of their own June 13, was found empty June 20. The hypothesis that the male was a *pallidax passerina* hybrid is certainly of interest. A Grasshopper Sparrow closely studied at Cap-à-l'Aigle, *Charlevoix*, June 17 (LM, D. Labrecque) was quite a long distance from its known breeding range, while the species was found breeding within its normal range in the Outaouais-Pontiac region at Shawville and Wyman (m.ob.). Again this summer Le Conte's Sparrow was observed along the St. Lawrence Valley, with birds at the Cap Tourmente N.W.A., July 8 (M.A. Brochu), five birds at La Pocatière throughout the summer (CA), and singles at L'Isle-Verte July 7 (MR, CM) and Cacouna June 13 (MR, CM). Owl surveys conducted in the Saguenay-L.-Saint-Jean region concurrently led to the discovery of at least 14 birds singing during the night at Saint-Fulgence, Saint-Honoré, Jonquière, Chambord, Saint-Léon and Chicoutimi (*vide* M. Savard). Also, two were found at Latulippe, *Témiscamingue*, June 30 (*vide* DS). A Yellow-headed Blackbird was reported at Maria, *Gaspé*, June 1 (L. Picard, R. Caissey, *vide* PP).

Noteworthy fringilids included an orange-morph House Finch at a Bonaventure feeder, *Gaspé*, in July (JMP), ≤100 Red Crossbills in the Saint-Lazare pinery, *Vaudreuil*, in June (R. Séguin, PB, m.ob.), and a young Com. Redpoll capable of flight at L. Dalcourt July 9 (LI, FG), well s. of their known range. A nest of the latter species at Kuujuaq, *Ungava*, contained four young at the early date of June 16 (Y. Gauthier).

Exotics

A Chukar was hidden in a garage at Grande-Rivière, *Gaspé*, July 10 (R. Garrett). A N. Bobwhite was singing in a cornfield at Saint-Hyacinthe July 30–31 (H. Deschênes, *vide* NR). A ♀ Ring-necked Pheasant was sitting on a nest containing 6 eggs and three young at Grand-Ruisseau, *Magdalen Is.*, July 29 (AR). A Ringed Turtle-Dove showed up at Rivière-Ouelle July 17 (CA). A Monk Parakeet was identified at Chandler in July (P. Roy, J. Roy). A Yellow-fronted Canary astounded observers present at La Salle, July 27 (PB *et al.*). A Nutmeg Mannikin was carefully studied at Rivière-Portneuf, *Saguenay*, July 21 (M&C Dixon).

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New England Region

WAYNE R. PETERSEN

June and July proved to be the fifth and sixth consecutive dry months. Although June temperatures and rainfall frequency were near normal, precipitation amounts fell more than an inch below the average and continued the dry trend of the past several summers. July was especially hot, and the average Boston temperature of 75.9°F was 2.4°F above normal, and 100°F temperatures July 14 were the hottest since the record-setting 102°F July 21, 1977. Rainfall during July was also slightly less than normal. Despite the continuing hot and dry trend of New England's weather, there were seemingly few detectable weather-related perturbations in the Region's bird populations this year.

Under the guidance of *Partners in Flight* (PIF; a national migratory bird conservation program), a number of states are beginning to initiate various monitoring programs to better track the future of North American migratory birds. One of the primary objec-

