

# Ontario Region

## RON RIDOUT

Following a cooler than normal April and early May, the summer period was the hottest on record across the province. Rain-fall was normal during June and early July. What would become a prolonged drought began during the latter half of July. All of this likely set the stage for a successful breeding season for most species.

The cool, wet conditions earlier in the spring pushed the migration window back, with the result that individuals of many species, normally well to the north, were still found in the south in early June. This included waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as many different passerines.

As might be expected of the summer season, outstanding rarities were almost non-existent. Ontario's first White-faced Ibis was the lone exception. This and the few other

rarities mentioned in this report are subject to the approval of the Ontario Bird Records Committee.

Abbreviations: Pelee (*Pt. Pelee N.P. and vicinity*); L.P.B.O. (*Long Point Bird Observatory*); O.B.R.C. (*Ontario Bird Records Committee*); T.C.B.O. (*Thunder Cape Bird Observatory*); Algonquin, Presqu'ile, and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in italics refer to counties, districts, and regional municipalities.

## Loons to Waterfowl

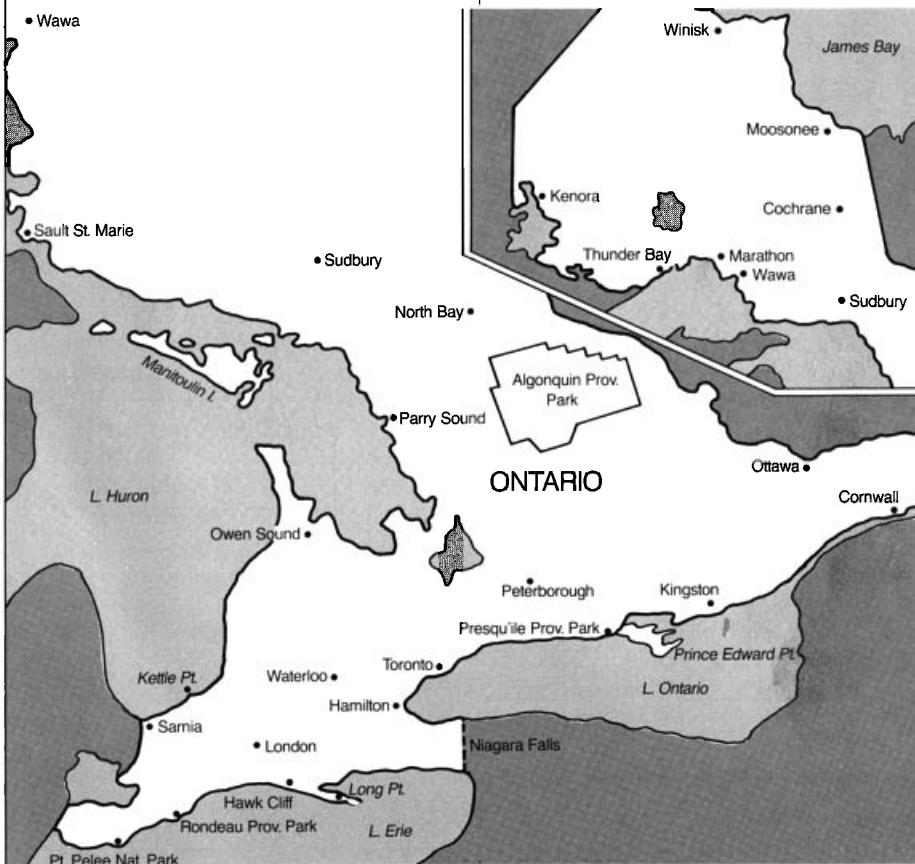
A Red-throated Loon on the St. Mary's R. e. of Sault Ste. Marie June 16 (EC) was noteworthy, while two inland on Chandos L., *Peterborough*, June 25 (D&PMa) were truly outstanding. A Horned Grebe at Pelee June 21 (AW, RE) was unusual there at that date, while an Eared at Tavistock July 29 (JMH) provided one of the province's few summer records. A mini-wave of Am. White Pelicans hit the south with individuals at London June 10 (H&JBU) and Luther Marsh, *Wellington*, July 6 (HBa), as well as two birds each at Long Pt., June 12-14 (SG) and Hamilton June 13+ (JMu, m.ob.). Numbers of Double-crested Cormorants at Presqu'ile were down slightly from 1994, with 2686 pairs censused by Canadian Wildlife Service biologists. A Great Egret at Atikokan June 5 (GP *et al.*) furnished that area's 2nd record.

The lone Snowy of the summer was found at Bronte June 25 (GE), while the only Cattle Egret was nearby at Hamilton from June 18+ (RD,BC). A Green Heron at Gore Bay July 23 (DB) was at the n. edge of the species' range. Many observers were able to see a Glossy Ibis which remained at the Nonquon lagoons, Durham, June 10-14. Ontario's first (and long overdue) White-faced Ibis was discovered near the Darlington Nuclear Station, *Durham*, June 20-21 (RP, v.o.).

Several late Tundra Swans included individuals at Norwich June 1 (J&JMH), Hillman Marsh, *Essex*, June 3 (AW), Pinery P.P., *Lambton*, June 5 (JS), and Richmond Hill until June 30 (GB). A late Snow Goose was seen at Burlington June 24 (KM), while individuals at Vankleek Hill July 16 (BD) and Cornwall July 22 (BD) were thought to have summered. The same was likely of a Brant at Presqu'ile July 27 (DM). Other n. waterfowl summering in the south included lone Canvasbacks at Hillman Marsh July 19 & 27-31 (AW) and Hamilton June 29-July 31 (RD), Greater Scaup at Tavistock through the period (JMH) and Niagara-on-the-Lake July 12 (KR), a Lesser Scaup at Hillman Marsh July 2 (AW), Oldsquaws at St. Isidore July 3 (BD) and Presqu'ile July 30 (CC), a White-winged Scoter at Cornwall July 22 (BD), and a Bufflehead at Toronto June 25 (AA). Waterfowl considered very late spring migrants included two Lesser Scaup at Lakefield June 8 (PB), a White-winged Scoter at Algonquin June 10 (WCa), and a Com. Goldeneye at Presqu'ile June 24 (SM). Unusual waterfowl included individual Eur. Wigeons at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, through the period (m.ob.), Presqu'ile May 28-June 3 (m.ob.), and Hamilton June 18-24 (RD, BC), an ad. ♂ Com. Eider on L. Ontario off Stoney Cr., June 3-4 (KM), and a ♂ Harlequin Duck at Sault Ste. Marie until June 17 (m.ob.).

## Raptors to Shorebirds

The first southbound Osprey of the season was seen quite early at Port Colborne July 23 (MM, RB). Others followed suit at Wheatley July 28 (AW), Dundas July 29 (RD), and Holland Landing July 31 (KS). An Am. Swallow-tailed Kite, which flew off the tip of Long Pt., June 7 (SO, LB, PL), was likely the same individual that had frequented the area w. of Walsingham in late May. A nesting pair of N. Goshawks discovered at St. Williams provided *Norfolk's* 2nd breeding record for this species (RR). While not unprecedented, a Rough-legged Hawk in the south at Merrickville July 15 (DC) was certainly very unusual. The success of the Peregrine reintroduction program in Ontario can certainly be measured by the number of nests found in



1995. Where none bred less than a decade ago, at least 9 nests were known in 1995. Perhaps most notable were 2 successful nests in downtown Toronto and one in downtown Hamilton. A pair in London displayed throughout the season but did not nest. Perhaps in 1996?

A similar story can be told of the Wild Turkey in s. Ontario. The reintroduction of this species has been wildly successful, with healthy populations in many former haunts. One example of the species' success was a bird seen within the Woodstock city limits June 5 (JMH). Several shorebirds set very late spring passage dates. These included a Black-bellied Plover at Presqu'île June 27 (J&LSa), a Semipalmated Plover at Bright's Grove June 29 (AR, PC), a Greater Yellowlegs at Hamilton June 18 (KM), a Semipalmated Sandpiper at Pelee June 23 (RE, AW), and, at Hillman Marsh, a Least June 9 (AW), a White-rumped June 24 (AW), and two Short-billed Dowitchers June 14–19 (AW). Advance the date, in some cases only a few days, and early southbound shorebirds included a Greater Yellowlegs at Blenheim June 27 (KB, JB, SC), two at Tavistock June 28 (JMH), a Solitary Sandpiper at Embrun June 22 (BD), a Whimbrel at Presqu'île July 8 (CC), a Ruddy Turnstone at Rock Point P.P., *Haldimand*, July 14 (WW), three Sanderlings at Hurkett June 28 (SP, BK), a Least Sandpiper at Hillman Marsh June 23 (AW), and a record-early Baird's at Pelee July 18 (DMi, AW). A Baird's at Bright's Grove June 29 (AR, PC) was highly unusual and might have been headed in either direction. A record-early Short-billed Dowitcher at Blenheim June 27 (KB, JB, SC) was not identified to sub-species. The first *hendersoni* was at Hillman Marsh June 29 (AW), while the first *griseus* appeared at Tavistock July 11 (JMH). Willet sightings involved individuals at Pelee June 15 (AW, v.o.), Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, June 19 (MS, MW), Long Pt., July 5–6 (MBr, JBo), Kingsville July 21 (LF), and two at Rock Pt. P.P., July 25 (OR). Other unusual shorebirds included lone W. Sandpipers at Worthington June 1 (JN) and Newmarket July 24 (KS), and Ruffs at Aylmer July 1–2 (DMn, LW) and Cranberry Marsh July 11 (JLy, v.o.).

### Gulls to Flycatchers

Two Franklin's Gull sightings in the south were just about average for recent summers. These involved singles at Ottawa June 10 (BD) and Rondeau July 8 (CM). Little Gull numbers were quite a bit lower than average, with about eight first-summer birds at Pelee during the period (AW). The first post-breeding adult was seen there July

18–20 (AW, v.o.). The only other reported was an adult at the Nonquon lagoons July 15 (MB). A Com. Black-headed Gull at Pelee July 18 (AW, DMi) furnished that area's 2nd-ever fall record. An ad. Bonaparte's Gull at Pelee July 8 (AW) provided a record post-breeding arrival; 570 adults there by July 23 was an excellent number that early and a juvenile the same day furnished a record-early arrival (AW). The Maple landfill attracted a Glaucous Gull until June 1 and an Iceland until July 6 (GB), both highly unusual in summer. Lesser Black-backed sightings included a first-summer bird at Pelee June 9 & 26 and July 8 (AW), a first-summer bird at Whitby June 17 (JI, RPi), an adult at St. Catharines July 12 (JMH, SCh), and three different-aged birds at the Blenheim landfill between July 1–21 (KB). A Great Black-backed Gull nest found at Hamilton June 10 (KM) provided that region's first breeding record. Migrant Arctic Terns along the Ottawa R. included two birds June 7 and nine the next day (BD).

Long-eared Owls are sporadic breeders across n. Ontario, so a nest at Thunder Bay June 3 (NE) and 4 nests in Algonquin (m.ob.) were noteworthy. The Walsingham Chuck-will's-widow discovered in May remained on territory through July (m.ob.), while the Manitoulin bird was last heard July 8 (JD). Another individual returned to a territory at a remote site on Long Pt. and was heard throughout June (GG, SGu). A Whip-poor-will heard at Atikokan July 10 (TN, DE) provided one of that area's few records. Reports of Red-bellied Woodpeckers, n. of their breeding range, are usually outside of the breeding season, so individuals at Peterborough June 24 (JC) and Colpoys's Bay, *Manitoulin*, July 2 (RW) were noteworthy. Known territorial Acadian Flycatchers totaled 13, with ten in *Norfolk* (DAS *et al.*), one in *Elgin* (DMn, LW), one in *Middlesex* (PR), and one in *Oxford* (JMH). Most were at known sites. Several historical territories were unoccupied. Individual W. Kingbirds were at T.C.B.O., June 3 & 7 (DO, JW) and L.P.B.O., June 7 (LB). An ad. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher found a bit of home at a native prairie restoration site near Walsingham July 7–10 (PCa, m.ob.).

### Swallows to Finches

While mid-summer congregations of Bank Swallows at Long Pt. were greatly reduced, notable numbers were found at nearby sites, including 5000 at Townsend July 19 (JM). Seven pairs of Tufted Titmice breeding in the Grand Bend area (JS) represented a noteworthy total for this provincially rare breeder. The first southbound Red-breasted Nuthatch at Dorland July 3 (JMH) her-

alded what would eventually become a major irruption later in the autumn period. A pair of House Wrens nesting at Sylvan Valley, *Algoma*, provided one of that district's few breeding records (DS). A territorial ♂ Veery at Pelee June 15–23 (AW) was notable, as was a Swainson's Thrush that spent the summer near Mono Mills (JDo). This is one of the most southerly breeding records in the province. Interestingly, this bird was only a few kilometers from where a territorial male was found in 1982 during the provincial atlassing period.

## SA A complete breeding bird inventory of the St.

**Williams Forest Station was conducted during the 1995 breeding season by L.P.B.O. staff. This extensive forest consists of 2 large tracts, one n. of the town of St. Williams and the other just n. of nearby Turkey Pt. on the n. shore of L. Erie. Both tracts contain a healthy mix of deciduous and coniferous trees. While several stands within the tracts are pure deciduous, a large number have a high proportion of coniferous trees. Some are pure in their coniferous composition. Large forest tracts of this type are very unusual in s. Ontario.**

**Not surprisingly, several species of birds reach their s. limit in the province at this station. While their presence has been documented for some time, the extent of their numbers had never been accurately determined before 1995. Species totals included ≤21 territorial Hermit Thrushes, 25 Solitary Vireos, seven Magnolia Warblers, 20 Blackburnians, single Nashville and Prairie warblers, and a Dark-eyed Junco. A pair of N. Goshawks has bred in the forest for several years and may well be the only pair to have nested in the s.w. end of the province in this century.**

Two N. Mockingbirds at T.C.B.O., *Thunder Bay*, June 6 were well n. of the species usual range but in keeping with its propensity to wander north. Conversely, an Am. Pipit at Wheatley June 3 (JSi, RS) was record late that far south. A Bohemian Waxwing at T.C.B.O., June 7 furnished the season's only record of this species. Numbers of breeding Loggerhead Shrikes slipped slightly. Sightings away from known areas included one each at Sault Ste. Marie June 11 (SW) and Goderich July 5 (GC).

Several noteworthy territorial male warblers included five Nashvilles at Chesney Bog, *Oxford*, June 14 (JMH), a N. Parula at Pelee June 4–28 (AW), and Kentuckys at

Bronte Creek P.P., *Halton*, May 16+ (GE *et al.*) and near Fenella May 25–July 8 (DAS, v.o.). Southern warblers n. of range included a Prothonotary near Baillieboro June 2 (PB) and a Hooded at Murphey Pt., *Manitoulin*, June 6 (AC). Several very late spring migrants included a Cape May at Pelee June 2 (AW, RE), a Black-throated Blue at T.C.B.O., June 7, a Yellow-rumped and a Prairie, both record late, at Pelee June 10 (AW), two Palms at T.C.B.O., June 2, another one record late at Long Pt., June 15 (GG), and a Wilson's at Pelee June 13 (AW, RE).

— A ♂ Summer Tanager at Long Pt., June 4 (LB) was the last of a normal spring incursion for this species. This species may, in fact, breed in the province on occasion, though this has never been conclusively proven. A Blue Grosbeak at Pelee June 1 (AW) was a record-late wanderer there, while a pair was found at Cedar Springs May 31 (D&NBa). Both birds were seen for 2 weeks, then the female disappeared. The male remained until July 8. The pair was observed copulating (PAW), though no further evidence of breeding was found. There is, as yet, no breeding record for this species in the province. Since this species is slowly expanding its breeding range northward in Ohio, it may not be unreasonable to expect breeding in s. Ontario at some point. A Dickcissel at Sylvan Valley May 31–June 2 (DS) was noteworthy. A Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Long Pt., June 2–3 (PL *et al.*) was notable given the species rarity in the south-west during spring migration. A White-throated Sparrow at Pelee June 10 (AW, RE) was very late there, while a White-crowned there June 9 (AW, RE) was record late. A Bobolink heard heading S at Dorland on the night of June 23 (JMH) may have been a record-early fall migrant; L.P.B.O.'s first fall migrant record is July 1. The *Bruce* population of Brewer's Blackbirds totaled at least 90 pairs, a slight increase over previous years (MW, DF). At Pelee, Orchard Orioles numbered at least 70 pairs (AW). The importance of this park to provincially uncommon breeders such as Orchard Oriole and Yellow-breasted Chat cannot be underestimated. Reports of n. finches were few in number. Twenty Red Crossbills at T.C.B.O., June 3 were the only ones reported from the north, though others were undoubtedly present. Three in the York Reg. Forest June 22 (EG) furnished a rare summer record there.

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# Appalachian Region

## GEORGE A. HALL

Mediocre! The summer season in the Appalachians could only be described thusly. Some reporters did not report, and many of those who did sent only meager notes. It was a hot period, with both months registering temperature excesses of over 120 day-degrees at the Pittsburgh weather station. June precipitation was about normal and July showed a slight deficiency. But this hot weather was only a prelude to a really hot late summer.

— The weather may have curtailed birders' activities, but most birds had very successful breeding seasons. While there was great variation from place to place, it would appear that most of the Neotropical migrants are doing fairly well in this Region. The long-term trend for southern species moving north continued for such species as Yellow-throated Warbler, and the parallel trend for northern species moving south also continued, with Cliff Swallows, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Magnolia Warblers, and Savannah Sparrows all summering south of their ranges, as these have been commonly understood.

There were a few late spring migrants remaining after the first of June, but no real fall migration had started by the end of the period.

Abbreviations: Ch.N.F. (*Chattahoochee N.F.*, GA); G.R.W.A. (*Grand R. Wildlife Area*, Trumbull Co., OH); M.C.F.H. (*Minor Clark Fish Hatchery*, Rowan Co., KY); M.W.A. (*Mosquito Wildlife Area*, Trumbull Co., OH); P.L.-S.P. (*Presque Isle S.P.*, Erie Co., PA); P.N.R. (*Powdermill Nature Reserve*, Westmoreland Co., PA).

