

PL). Prothonotary Warblers numbered four: two different individuals Sep. 2 & 10 on Sable I. (ZL), with singles Sep. 27 at Schooner Pd., NS (RK) and Aug. 29 at Cappahayden, NF (JW). The only w. warbler was a **Townsend's Warbler** at Renewes Nov. 15–18, the 8th provincial record (BM et al.). Kentucky Warblers were at Bear Cove, NF, Sep. 7 (KK) and at St. John's Sep. 9 (JS). Hooded Warblers were largely in Nova Scotia: three Aug. 30 on Sable I. (ZL), one Sep. 4 on CSI (MN), one Sep. 12 on Brier I. (CAM, ALM), and Nov. 18–29 Halifax (m. ob.). Another was present Sep. 15 at Renewes (PL).

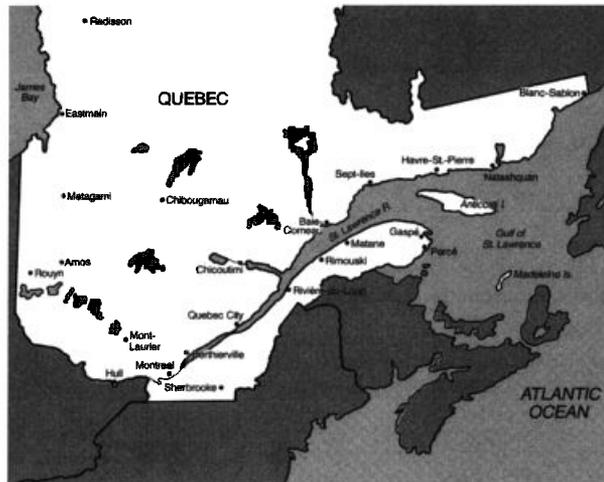
Outside the "Great Fallout," there were Summer Tanagers at Seal I. Oct. 7 (AC) and Dartmouth Nov. 1 (FL). **Western Tanagers** were found Oct. 12–13 CSI (BMy) and Oct. 20–25 Dartmouth, NS (PD et al.). The status of **Spotted Towhee** in the East is still unravelling since it gained status as a separate species. The 2nd in the Region was one near Charlottetown, PEI, Nov. 2–8 (RC et al.). A **Lark Bunting** at Castalia, GMI, Sep. 19–20 was the first provincial sighting in 2 decades of this once regular stray (RW et al.). A well-described **Henslow's Sparrow** at Castalia, GMI, Sep. 25 was the 2nd for the province (KE). The only Orchard Oriole was one at St. Pauls I. off the n. tip of Cape Breton I., NS, in late Aug. (BMy). Records of Blue Grosbeak were singles Sep. 16 at GMI (JE) and Cape Race Oct. 3–10 (TB et al.). A House Finch made it to Sable I. Oct. 18 (RS, ZL)—next stop Newfoundland? The only abundant finch was White-winged Crossbill, which appeared to enjoy good reproductive successes from w. Newfoundland to New Brunswick during the period.

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québec region



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Following the trend of the last seven or eight months, fall temperatures continued to be above normal, while rainfall was below normal, particularly in n. Québec. It was an excellent season for passerines as well as for nonpasserines. Quite surprising was the occurrence of a good number of s. warblers late in the season. The Nov. 10–11 storm responsible for the wave of Franklin's Gulls in the e. regions of the continent was probably also a contributive factor in the occurrence of many w. species in the province, including Tundra Swans and Ross's Geese in record number. Other highlights were an Am. Avocet in the Abitibi region, a "Lawrence's Warbler" and a Summer Tanager near Montreal, a Spotted Towhee in the L. Saint-Jean region, and an astounding **Hooded Oriole** in e. Québec.

STORM-PETRELS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A Wilson's Storm-Petrel strayed to Portneuf, w. of Québec City Sep. 27 (FD), while one at Lévis Sep. 18 was not unprecedented (JL). Amazingly, a Leach's Storm-Petrel at Victoriaville Aug. 27 was the 5th record in 10 years for this inland locality (JD, J. Boissonneault et al.).

Four Great Egrets reached La Pocatière Aug. 16 (CA, CG). There were a record high seven Little Blue Herons reported; the latest

was spotted at Saint-Ferdinand Oct. 13, a new Regional record late date (R. Gingras). A *Plegadis* ibis at Saint-Étienne-de-Beauharnois Aug. 22– Sep. 13 was not very cooperative, complicating its specific identification (v. ob.). Tundra Swans appeared in unprecedented numbers following the Nov. 10–11 storm and included flocks of 14 at Ayer's Cliff Nov. 14 (A. Schmidt) and 10 at Saint-Lazare Nov. 14+ (L. Miller, v. ob.), while two appeared at Contrecoeur

Nov. 14 (R. Jussaume), and one was killed at Baie-du-Febvre Nov. 13 (*vide* S. Dulac). The number of Greater White-fronted Geese was low, with one at Montmagny Oct. 4 (JL) and two at Saint-Prime Oct. 17 (L. Chiricota). By contrast, the number of Ross's Geese was high and included several blue morphs. Representing the biggest flock ever reported in the Region, the seven birds at Victoriaville Nov. 14 may have been related to the Nov. 10–11 storm (MG et al.). For the 2nd consecutive year, presumed Ross's X Snow Goose hybrids were reported, this time at Cap Tourmente in Oct. (GL, JPO, ML). Eur. Wigeons involved one at Baie-du-Febvre from Aug. to Oct. (SB) and two at Terrebonne Sep. 20 (I. Lusignan). An imm. male King Eider at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu Nov. 1–14 represented one of very few records for s.w. Québec (P. Beaulé, L. Simard). Reports of Barrow's × Com. Goldeneye hybrids are reported with increasing frequency and included two at La Malbaie Nov. 12–27 (C. Marcotte) and one at Beaumont Nov. 14 (JL).

VULTURES THROUGH ALCIDS

A Black Vulture at New-Richmond was confirmed only in Dec. but had apparently been present since late Sep. at the local dump (R. Caissy et al.). Over 100 Turkey Vultures were counted Sep. 10 at Saint-Charles-de-Mandeville, in the Lanaudière region, the stronghold of this species in the Province (S. Lafrenière). Our two regularly monitored hawkwatches, Tadoussac (CA,

CG) and Montreal (M. McIntosh, BB) produced an average number of hawks. Exceptions were Ospreys and Rough-legged Hawks that numbered twice their respective averages at Tadoussac (CA, CG). Hawk-watchers were rewarded by the sighting of two dark-morph Red-tailed Hawks at Saint-Féréol-des-Neiges Oct. 4 (GL) as well as singles at Tadoussac Sep. 23 (CG, S. Flipo) and Oct. 12 (CA). An imm. "Kriders" Red-tailed Hawk was studied at close range in the Montreal Botanical Gardens Oct. 22 (GZ). Wild Turkeys, apparently stocked birds, included eight at Point Platon in mid-Oct. (L. Roy), 37 at Saint-Élie-d'Orford Oct. 23–25 (C. & G. O'Neil, C. & R. Côté), and 6 at Austin Nov. 1 (C. & G. O'Neil). Although there had been about 12 previous records of the Purple Gallinule, very few active listers had seen the species in the province. This fall, two very cooperative birds, both immatures, showed up and remained long enough to be seen by many birders. The first appeared at Saint-Gédéon Sep. 12–26 (C. Cormier, GS) and the 2nd at Cap Tourmente Nov. 1–3 (GL et al.). Sandhill Cranes continued to thrive in the w. central areas of

SA Long-billed Dowitchers staged their biggest invasion ever in the Region. An adult in alternate plumage appeared early at Sainte-Martine Aug. 2 and remained there until a 2nd one joined it Aug. 22–26 (PB, v. ob.). A 3rd adult was also located at Montmagny Aug. 4–6 (A. Côté). From Sep. 5 through Oct. 25, juveniles were found in record numbers. High counts of eight and 40 were tallied at Saint-Blaise Sep. 20–Oct. 4 (PB, v. ob.) and Saint-Étienne Oct. 17 (PB, GZ), respectively. Single juveniles were also reported at Saint-Basile-le-Grand Sep. 12 (SD) and Oka Sep. 25 (G. Lachaine, H. Presseau). Whether this increase in the number of birds migrating through our area is related to a better breeding success in n.w. N. America and Siberia or whether these birds were displaced eastward by peculiar weather conditions is unknown. However, according to the Russian ornithologist P. S. Tomkovitch (*Brit. Birds* 85: 344–365, 1992), this species has spread 2500 km westward in Siberia since 1920. Breeding has recently been recorded as far w. as s.w. Taïmyr Peninsula. The reasons for these population and distribution changes are not yet clear.

the Region, as shown by counts of 550 birds in the Abitibi region Sep. 26 (SD et al.) and over 60 in the L. Saint-Jean region in late Sep. (*vide* GS).

Eastern straying of Am. Avocets included singles at I. aux Grues Aug. 5–12 (J. Landry) and I. aux Fermiers Aug. 7 (M. Picard et al.) and a record late bird at Saint-Laurent-de-Gallichan, *Abitibi*, Nov. 14, also in the wake of the Nov. 10–11 storm. The discovery of four W. Sandpipers was a notable event: two were at Montmagny Aug. 16 (GL), singles at Res. Taureau Aug. 18 (PH) and Beauport Aug. 28 (RL). It was almost certainly the best autumn ever for Buff-breasted Sandpipers, with a total of 17 that included a record count of 10 at Saint-Vallier Aug. 23 (L. Imbeau, M. Bélisle). The lone Ruff of the fall was a female at Montmagny Aug. 6–9 (GL). Single Red Phalaropes were worthy of mention at I. aux Basques Oct. 2 (B. Belloc et al.) and at Richelieu Oct. 26 (J. Barrette, G. Turcotte).

Only two Laughing Gulls were recorded. Of the 13 Franklin's Gulls reported, a remarkable total, only three appeared after the Nov. 10–11 storm. These three individuals lingered at Victoriaville Nov. 14–21. A first-winter bird was still there Nov. 26 for a Regional record-late date (JD et al.). Little Gulls totalled 14 birds, half of them found along the n. shore of the St. Lawrence river. The n. shore also hosted five Black-headed Gulls (CA, CG). Another one was found at Newport Nov. 22 (E. Arsenault), while a record count of 18 was made at Havre-aux-Basques, Magdalen Island, Nov. 9 (DGG). The total of 14 Lesser Black-backed Gulls represented an average number. A bird showing some of the features of *intermedius* turned up at Victoriaville Oct. 4 (MG et al., ph.). Eleven Sabine's Gulls were reported Aug. 22–Sep. 27. As expected, all were juveniles except for a rare adult at Metabetchouan Sep. 4 (S. Boivin). An Arctic Tern at Venise-en-Québec Oct. 12 provided one of few fall records for s.w. Québec (JG. Papi-neau). Given that it was not a particularly good season for Dovekies in the e. part of the Province, it was difficult to explain why single birds appeared as far w. as Baie-du-Febvre Nov. 10–11 (SB, J. Giguère, v. ob.) and Saint-Vallier Nov. 16 (FD, RD). An imm. **Ancient Murrelet** at Chambly Oct. 25 (PB, D. Tétreault) represented the first modern occurrence of this species in the Region. The only other record refers to a specimen, now untraceable, found in Montreal Apr. 13, 1913, a date not in accordance with the well-known fall dispersal of this species towards the e. regions of the continent. Two

Atlantic Puffins turned up unexpectedly at Saint-Vallier Nov. 16 (FD, RD).

CUCKOOS THROUGH VIREOS

The nearly annual dispersal of Yellow-billed Cuckoos into the Region was unimpressive, with only two birds reported: one remained in the Montreal Botanical Gardens Sep. 20–26 (H. Longpré, v. ob.); the other made a deadly crash into a window pane in Sainte-Rose-du-Nord Oct. 3 (P. Gravel), for a 5th record in the Saguenay area. Yet another **White-winged Dove**, our 7th record since 1988, was located on Brion I., Magdalen Island, Aug. 1–4 (DGG, AH); we agree with Noel Wamer's suggestion (*FN* 52: 294) that the species is showing an increased spring vagrancy pattern. The female Black-backed Woodpecker found in the Saint-Lazare pinery Sep. 19 (AH) was very possibly a member of the wintering pair last seen May 23 (ND, R. Bisson), perhaps indicating a rare local overwintering occurrence. A Red-headed Woodpecker visited a feeder in Saint-Jean-de-Dieu, *Rimouski*, Oct. 28–29 (C. Pelletier), and another was seen in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue Nov. 14 onwards (JJ, AR).

An *Empidonax* flycatcher was studied at length at Melocheville Nov. 29 (R. Yank), a stunning 48 days after the latest *Empidonax* ever recorded in the Region, and the meticulous description, including that of the call, indicated a Least Flycatcher; at any rate, the documentation cannot be used to substantiate any other species. A Say's Phoebe was discovered in Sainte-Anne-de-Portneuf Sep. 7 (F. Grenon) and, as is the case for most previous records, was not seen afterward. An E. Kingbird nest with 3 nestlings was discovered in Sainte-Catherine, *Montreal*, on the extremely late date of Aug. 30, and the family was last seen Sep. 19 (PB).

From late Aug. into early Oct., a large movement of young Gray Jays and Boreal Chickadees was documented at the Tadoussac banding station (J. Ibarzabal); since an irruption failed to materialize in the upper St. Lawrence Valley, in all likelihood the birds remained in the boreal forests north of Québec City. A Carolina Wren at Cap Tourmente Oct. 13 (RL) represented one of the very few occurrences of the species outside the s.w. parts of the province. The single N. Wheatear of the season was at Barachois, *Gaspé*, Aug. 29 (PP). The description provided for a Hermit Thrush, found on I. des Soeurs Nov. 24 (M. Brongo), most likely indicated a bird from the western *auduboni* race. A White-eyed Vireo at Aylmer Oct. 25 (F. Bédard, P. Laroche) was a rare find.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A male of the rare hybrid "Lawrence's Warbler" attracted numerous birders on I. des Soeurs Nov. 12-27 (JJ, AR) and represented our 2nd record, the first having occurred in Westmount May 26, 1978 (BB, PH) Other noteworthy warblers in the Montreal area included a Prairie Warbler in Longueuil Sep. 23 (D. Daigneault), and two record-late birds: a Hooded Warbler in Outremont Sep. 8 (C. Schools, *vide* SD), and an Am. Redstart on I. des Soeurs Nov. 21-Dec 8 (F. Gariépy). In the Québec City area, numerous birdwatchers had the opportunity to add three rare warblers to their lists, as a Prairie Warbler was at Sainte-Foy Oct. 12-Nov. 9 (S. Lemieux), an elusive and record-late Kentucky Warbler at Cap Tourmente Oct. 27-Nov. 9 (P. Otis, D. McCutcheon), and a cooperative Worm-eating Warbler in Québec City Nov. 5-22 (C. Vachon, R. Gingras).

A Summer Tanager in female or imm. male plumage showed up at a Longueuil feeder in mid-Nov. (S. Péloquin, N. Morissette, v. t.). The only Blue Grosbeak of the season was at Chandler Oct. 27-Nov. 4 (R. Garret, M. Garant). As usual, single Dickcissels showed up in the e. parts of the Province at Rimouski Sep. 21-30 (G. Gendron), at Baie-Comeau Oct. 3-4 (GC), at Rivière-Saint-Jean Oct. 25-26 (C. Buidin), and two different individuals in Québec City, respectively Nov. 14 and Nov. 24 onwards (*vide* JL). The **Spotted Towhee** that delighted many observers at Sainte-Hedwidge Nov. 10-18 represented a 10th provincial record and the 3rd in the L. Saint-Jean area. A Clay-colored Sparrow was spotted in Baie-Comeau on 2 occasions and 10 km apart, Oct. 3-4 and Oct. 16-18 (GC), and another was found at Cap Tourmente Nov 1 (GL). Last fall, we outlined the pitfalls of western junco identification in the East (FN 52: 27), with the result that an observer sent us a photograph of an adult of the "Gray-headed Junco" seen in Québec City in late Oct. 1993 (A. Schink); and for this fall, we received an adequate description of a "Pink-sided Junco" seen in Lac-Beauport Oct. 17 (P. Lane). Both represent our first adequately substantiated reports, and very few records in E. Canada are similarly documented.

A Yellow-headed Blackbird was in Valleyfield Nov. 25 (M. Lalumière), and an ad male Orchard Oriole was found near the mouth of the Bersimis R. Nov. 9 (A. Gosselin, R. Gilbert). A very serious contender for the title of "Prize Bird" of the season was the **Hooded Oriole** present at

Matapédia since at least Nov. 22, identified Nov. 25 (Christianne Pitre), and seen afterwards by hundreds of observers. This is of course a first Provincial record and apparently only the 2nd in E. Canada, the other being in Ontario. With its black forehead and orange tinge, it was identified as one of the races of the *cucullatus* group (Lower Rio Grande and E. Mexico). Despite temperatures below the freezing point, the bird remained healthy, attending fruit trees and feeders and taking refuge at night in a light-church belfry.

INTRODUCED SPECIES

A Collared Finchbill, present in the Québec City area since Jan. 1996, was sighted again (the same individual?) in Sainte-Foy Oct. 11 (O. Barden). The Montreal Botanical Gardens hosted an Orange-cheeked Waxbill Oct. 31+ (J-F. Moulin, D. Granger), and at least 2 Eur. Goldfinches were reported (GZ).

ADDENDA

Two Am. White Pelicans were photographed at Beauharnois Jul. 22, 1997 (C. Laplante, D. Legault, B. Leduc). A Brant of the race *nigricans* was a rare find at Trois-Pistoles Jun. 21, 1998 (JPO). This represents the 9th record

in the Region (*vide* J. Larivée). A Lesser Black-backed Gull photographed at Saint-Irénée May 18, 1998, was almost as dark as a Great Black-backed Gull, thus suggesting either *intermedius* or a Dutch intergrade type (ML, JPO).

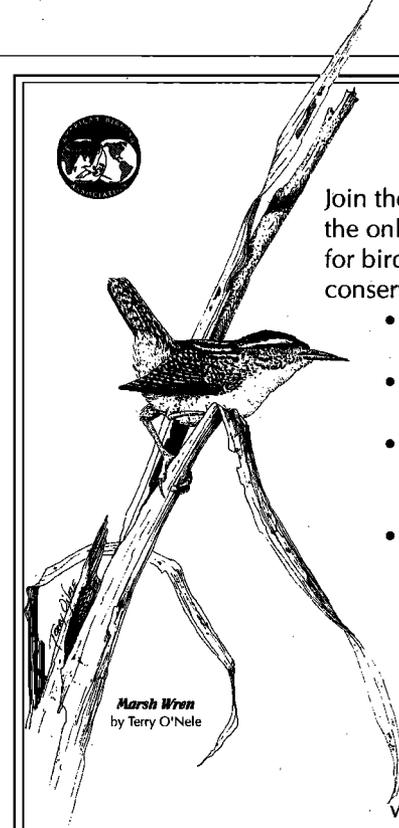
CORRIGENDUM

In FN 52: 301, read 18 Eur. Wigeons (not "118").

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Marsh Wren
by Terry O'Nele

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