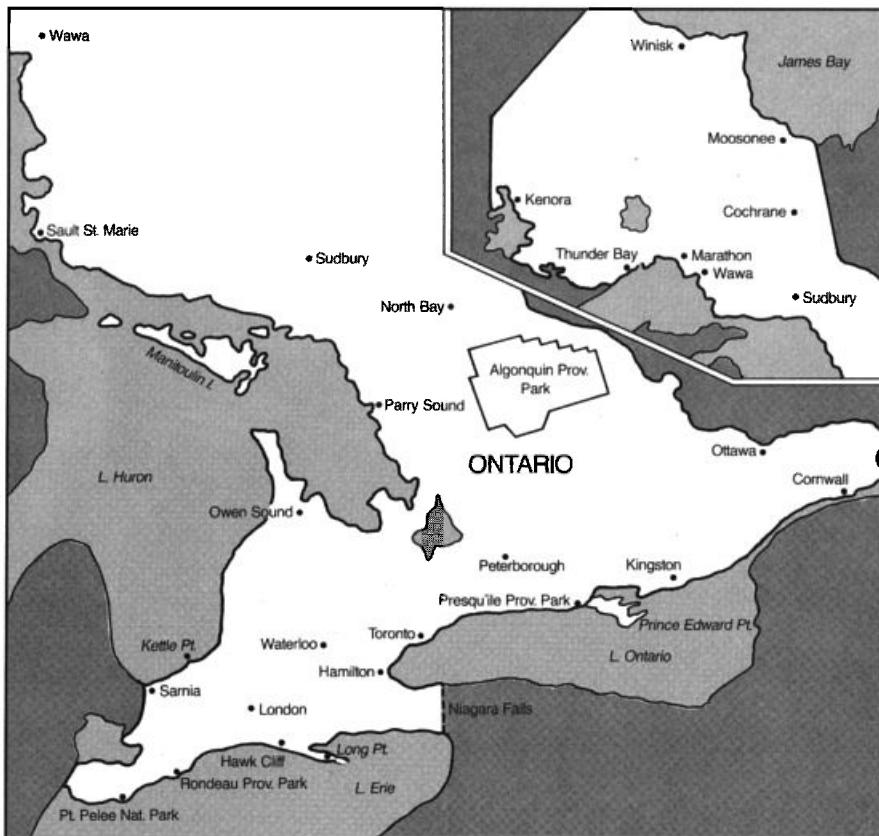


# ontario



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Cool, wet weather dominated this period in the southern and the northern parts of the province, creating lush conditions which brought in a plethora of exciting bird sightings. Birds seemed to sing longer because of the wet conditions and were therefore recorded more frequently during surveys in June. Hot summer days did not arrive until later in June. The outstanding rarity was an Anhinga which arrived in mid-July west of London and was present into September. Other exciting finds were a moribund storm-petrel at Long Point and a Lewis's Woodpecker in *Northumberland*. All these rarities and the others mentioned below are subject to the approval of the Ontario Bird Records Committee.

**Abbreviations:** C.A. (Conservation Area); L.P.B.O. (Long Point Bird Observatory, *Haldimand-Norfolk*); Pelee (Pt. Pelee Nat'l. Park and vicinity, *Essex*); ROM (Royal Ontario Museum). Algonquin, Presqu'île, and Rondeau are Provincial Parks.

Place names in *italics* refer to counties, districts, or regional municipalities.

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Red-throated Loons 5 Jun at Hasting's Drive, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (IR), and 8 Jun at the base of Long Pt., *Haldimand-Norfolk*, (LMu) were late stragglers, as were single Common Loons at Selkirk P.P., *Haldimand-Norfolk*, 20 Jul (JBM) and Pinery P.P., *Lambton* (AR). An ad. Pied-billed Grebe at Tavistock, Oxford, 4 Jul may have been an early southbound migrant (JMH). A Horned Grebe in breeding plumage was at Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, from 24 Jun for at least five weeks, but no evidence of breeding was found (RS, GCo, LJ). Another was on Lake Ontario off Burlington, *Halton*, 8 Jul (KAM). Both were unusually far s. for the season. Up to 6 pairs of Red-necked Grebes attempted to nest in the Bronte Harbour Marina, *Halton* (GE); a pair at Scotch Block Reservoir in Milton, *Halton*, was at an unusual site (BK). Two pairs successfully raised one young each at Kelley Lake, *Sudbury*, for a first confirmed nesting in the area (JL, CBI). A single bird at Lerome Lake, Atikokan, *Rainy River*, 20 Jul was rare for summer (DE). An Eared Grebe

at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, 15–17 Jun was highly unusual (THo, m.ob.), as was another at Grand Bend S.T.P., *Lambton*, 1 Jun (AR). An alternate-plumaged male was at Tavistock, *Oxford*, from May to 3 Jun for *Oxford's* first June record (JMH). A dying storm-petrel was picked up by boaters off Pottohawk Pt. in the area of L.P.B.O. 13 Jul (RR, IR). It was identified as a **Band-rumped Storm-Petrel**, and the specimen has been deposited at the ROM (MP). Over 10 American White Pelicans were at the waterfront at Thunder Bay 28 Jun (BB); 2 others, rare for s. Ontario in summer, were at L.P.B.O. 8 Jun (DGo, IR), and one flew over Dundas Marsh, *Hamilton-Wentworth* 8 Jul (DMo). As a sign of the ever-increasing population of Double-crested Cormorants in the Great Lakes Region, over 600 imm. birds were at Kettle Pt., *Lambton*, 11 Jun (AR).

**SA** The great attraction of the season was an Anhinga found 17 Jul at the Delaware Sportsman Club Marsh, *Middlesex* (LM). Except for absences of varying lengths of time, it remained in the marsh well into September, occupying the same perch every night; it has been seen by over 1500 observers. This is only the second accepted record for Ontario. A specimen (now missing) was collected at West Lake, *Prince Edward*, 7 Sep 1904 (RJ). Another specimen from 1881 from Garden River, *Algoma*, has not been accepted as a valid record (RJ).

Sightings of Great Egrets in many parts of the province confirm the increasing spread of this species. Particularly noteworthy were single birds at Lake Travers, *Algonquin*, 29–31 Jul (CaR, ChR, et al.) and 30 Jul at Atikokan, *Rainy River*, the 5th for the district (DGr, DE). At Presqu'île 3 pairs were nesting (*vide* MR), and 5 individuals were in stormwater ponds at the side of Hwy. 407, in Mississauga, *Peel* (GC). Two Snowy Egrets at Fort Erie, *Niagara*, 15 Jun (JSp), one at Rondeau 10 Jun (JTB), and one at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, 17 Jun were unusual (RS, SE, DSh). A Tricolored Heron at Hillman Marsh, *Essex*, made a fleeting appearance on 31 Jul (*vide* SR). Two ad. Black-crowned Night-Herons were at Kelley Lake, *Manitoulin*, 25–31 Jul (CBI, JL). Vagrant Black Vultures continue to increase. Single birds were at Backus Woods, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, 10 Jun (JF), at Hillman Marsh, *Essex*, 30 Jul (R&SM), and on the Bruce Peninsula, *Grey-Bruce*, 5 Jul

(DGa,DL). Near Kakabeka Falls, *Thunder Bay*, 88 Turkey Vultures 23 Jul were an unprecedented number for the area (JHo).

#### **WATERFOWL THROUGH SHOREBIRDS**

An out-of-season Snow Goose was at the Mitchell S.T.P., *Perth*, 30 Jul (DB). A pair of Canada Geese with 4 goslings at Pogonia Lake in Algonquin 8 Jun was a rare sighting for the park (PS). A late Brant was at Cobourg, *Northumberland*, 3 Jun (CEG). On 17 May, 2 Eurasian Wigeons were at Robinson Lake, *Sudbury*, for only the second record for the area (BCo); one was at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, 16 Jun (PH), and another was at the Grimsby S.T.P., *Niagara*, 9 Jul (KAM). A Cinnamon Teal was in Slate River Valley, *Thunder Bay*, 18 Jun and had been seen on earlier occasions (PRo). Eight juvenile Northern Shovelers at Lakefield S.T.P. 20–21 Jul provided evidence of the first breeding record for the Peterborough area (FH, PB, DrM). After a pair set a first breeding record for Toronto last year (see Nesting Season 1999) Canvasbacks produced three nests at the Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, this season and provided the first nest record for Ontario

(GCo, MP, RS). Apparently only 2 young survived out of at least 21 eggs (details to be published, GCo). Two female Redheads with broods of recently hatched young were evidence of successful breeding for the 4th year at the Tollgate Ponds in Hamilton Harbour, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, 26 Jul (RZD).

At least 4 ad. Bald Eagles were seen in Algonquin during the period, which suggests that they may breed in the park in the near future (RT). A pair nested in Komoka, *Middlesex*, the first to nest in the county in nearly 30 years (DW, PR, AWh). A flock of 5 Red-shouldered Hawks 20 Jun at Cedar Lake in Algonquin was a rare sight (MRu). A pair of Broad-winged Hawks, an unusual breeding species for s. Ontario, successfully raised young near Newbury, *Middlesex* (PR, RoS, DMa). An ad. Golden Eagle flew over London, *Middlesex*, 4 Jun and was probably a late migrant (BL). Peregrine Falcons continue to breed successfully both in urban areas and elsewhere. Urban nesting birds successfully raised three young each in Etobicoke, *Toronto* (MG *vide* www.peregrine-foundation.ca), Hamilton (MS), London, *Middlesex*, (PR), Ottawa (MG *vide* www.peregrine-foundation.ca) and down-

town Toronto (MG *vide* www.peregrine-foundation.ca). A pair bred on cliffs of the Bruce Peninsula, *Grey-Bruce*, for the first time in almost 50 years (*vide* JJ). Another pair chose the chimney of an abandoned smelter in Coniston, *Sudbury*, to raise 2 young (CBL, JL) and, unusual for the period, a single bird appeared to be scouting for a nest in an abandoned open pit mine near Atikokan, *Rainy River*, 3 Jul (DE).

Several sightings of Gray Partridge have been reported during the season in and near Woodstock, *Oxford*, apparently a newly populated area (*vide* JMH). Northern Bobwhite appeared to repopulate some areas where they were previously found in and near London, *Middlesex* (BVB *vide* PR). Only rarely seen, King Rails were at Big Creek Marsh, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, in early Jul and near the L.P.B.O. headquarters through Jul (JDM et al.). Sandhill Cranes were confirmed breeding when 2 adults and 2 young were at a farm near Rice Lake, *Peterborough*, 14 Jun (BS). Elsewhere in *Peterborough* there were at least four locations where breeding was suspected (DCS). A single bird flying over Fifty Pt. C.A., *Niagara*, 14 Jun was unusual for the location and date (RZD). A nesting pair of Piping Plovers and a single



A Canvasback nest with nine eggs at Tommy Thompson Park near Toronto 11 Jun 2000; see cover and report for details of this first nesting record for Ontario. Photograph by Mark Peck.

adult were at Windy Pt., *Rainy River*, 4 Jul (DE); an unmated male maintained a territory near the tip of Long Pt., *Haldimand-Norfolk*, for all of Jun and until 15 Jul (ME, et al.). Single American Avocets were at Mission I., *Thunder Bay*, 17 Jun (GW) and near the Pinery P.P., *Lambton*, 30 Jul (AR, AWi *vide* ONTBIRDS). At the Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, there were 3 Ruddy Turnstones 12 Jun (GCo) and a late one 18 Jun (RS). A male **Ruff** 28–31 Jul at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham*, was a welcome sight (PH, TH, m.ob.).

### GULLS THROUGH WRENS

Several unusual gulls were recorded during the period. An ad. Laughing Gull was at the Blenheim Landfill, *Kent*, 10–13 Jul (KJB) and another was at the Tip of Long Pt., *Haldimand-Norfolk*, 5 Jun (PT). An astonishing 1000+ Franklin's Gulls appeared suddenly at Windy Pt., *Rainy River*, 12 Jun (DE). An ad. Black-headed Gull in breeding plumage was at Cobourg, *Northumberland*, 18 Jun (CEG, MB). The **Heermann's Gull** discovered in Toronto Harbour on 14 Nov 1999 and described in the Fall 1999 report (MB) has remained in the area and is still present at this writing (CSAM, JI). A most surprising second-alternate Iceland Gull was at the Burlington Ship Canal, *Hamilton-Wentworth/Haldimand-Norfolk*, 13 Jun (RZD). Early fall migrants were 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Wheatley Harbour, *Chatham-Kent*, 16 Jul (AW), singles at Selkirk P.P., *Haldimand-Norfolk*, 3 & 14 Jul (JBM), and a single first-summer bird at Erieau, *Kent*, 29 Jul (KJB). During June a new colony of Black Terns was discovered on the Albany River, *Thunder Bay*, near the n. edge of their range (SBr). Great Gray Owls were seen at Hansen Lake near Nipigon, *Thunder Bay*, 2 Jun (RH), w. of Upsala, *Thunder Bay*, 5 Jun (PR), and near Raith on Hwy. 17, *Thunder Bay*, 14 Jun (anon *vide* TA). In late Jul a young Northern Saw-whet Owl was found in London, an unusual nesting species for *Middlesex* and not previously recorded from London (PR). A Chuck-will's-widow was calling at the Tip of Long Pt., *Haldimand-Norfolk*, 7 Jun (ME). A rare Rufous Hummingbird was at a feeder near Red Rock, *Thunder Bay*, 31 Jul (T&LG). A somewhat elusive **Lewis's Woodpecker** visited a feeder at Hilton n. of Brighton, *Northumberland*, from before 13 Jun until at least 18 Jun (CEG, BSt). Although Red-headed Woodpeckers seem to be undergoing a steep decline, it is encouraging to be able to report sightings of a single bird from the Mitchell S.T.P., *Perth*, 2 Jul (DB), 2 birds from

Cobourg, *Northumberland*, during the period (CEG), a nesting pair with young at Cottesloe, *Peterborough*, (DCS), and 3 birds (2 adults, 1 immature) at Pinery P.P., *Lambton*, 4 Jul (AR).

An Acadian Flycatcher was banded at L.P.B.O. 2 Jun (KW). Two nests and 3 territorial males found in Backus Woods, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, (JDM), and 4 nests found in Skunk's Misery near Newbury, *Middlesex*, suggest a likely population increase (PR, DMA, RoS). Three Willow Flycatchers at Burwash, *Sudbury*, 6 Jun (m.ob.) and one at Gore Bay, *Manitoulin*, 3 Jun (CB) were unusually far n. Early fall migrants at Pelee were 3 Least Flycatchers 11 Jul (AW, HON). A Western Kingbird 1 km n. of Rainy River, *Rainy River*, 12 Jul was the only record received for the province (DE). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Manitowaning, *Manitoulin*, 28 Jul attracted much attention (CV). A pair of Loggerhead Shrikes fledged 6 young in Howland Township, *Manitoulin*, (CB et al.), while one at Wellburn, *Perth*, 8 Jul was well out of its range (EB). A Swainson's Thrush at Pelee 7 Jun was probably an early fall migrant (AW). *Middlesex* recorded Sedge Wrens, unusual nesters in the county; 2 were at Harrietsville 2 Jun (DMa), 2 were near Strathroy 17 Jun (PR, SuR) and 2 were w. of Mt. Brydges 2 Jul (PR).

### MIMIDS THROUGH FINCHES

The sighting of a Gray Catbird in Thunder Bay City 8 Jun was a rare occurrence (TA). The increasing numbers of Northern Mockingbirds in southern Ontario are resulting in a spread farther n. In mid-Jun a pair was e. of Echo Bay, *Algoma*, and another pair near the Bar River, *Algoma*, (BKn). The nest of a Mountain Bluebird paired with an Eastern Bluebird at Hilton n. of Brighton, *Northumberland* failed to produce offspring (CEG). An active Northern Parula nest was reported from the East Beach on Lake of Two Rivers, *Algonquin*, 19 Jul (anon *vide* DT, RT). If confirmed this would be only the 2nd or 3rd nest found in Ontario, although the species is widespread in Algonquin and surrounding areas (RT). A singing male Cape May Warbler e. of Purple Woods, *Durham*, 21 Jun (DBa), and a male Palm Warbler in s. *Bruce* 23 Jun (BAM) were clearly out-of-range. A late Blackpoll Warbler was at Pelee 15 Jun (AW). Three nesting pairs of Prothonotary Warblers and one unmated bird were in the L.P.B.O. area during the period (JDM); a single was at Pelee I., *Essex*, 11 Jun (DWa). A singing male Connecticut Warbler at Howland, *Manitoulin* 23 Jun was s. of its range (CB). Several rare vagrant

Kentucky Warblers were reported. One territorial male was at Bronte Creek, *Halton*, at least until 7 Jun (anon *vide* HC). Another was at the Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto* 3–4 Jun (AJ, CSAM, *vide* ONTBIRDS). Over 60 pairs of Hooded Warblers, an unusually large number, were in the area of L.P.B.O. during the season (BMW, MEG, JDM); several were found at Skunk's Misery near Newbury, *Middlesex*, (DMA, PR, RoS). A territorial male was at Bronte Creek P.P., *Halton*, 4 Jun–31 Jul (BK, FU), and a male was at a new site in Tillsonburg, *Oxford*, 25 Jun (JMH, MHo). Single Yellow-breasted Chats, considered provincially rare, were at Aldershot, *Halton*, 7 Jun (RZD), at Clappison Corners, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, 30 Jun (anon, *vide* HC), and near Strathroy, *Middlesex*, 17 Jun (PR, SuR).

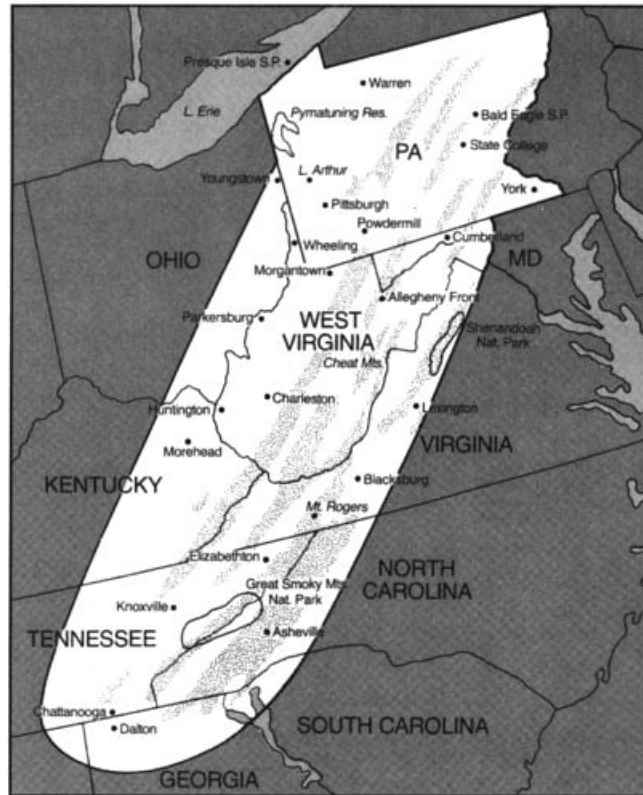
A territorial male Summer Tanager at Wheatley, *Kent*, was present from May and seen sporadically to 12 Jul (THi); another was n. of Tilden Woods, *Pelee*, 17 Jun (FU). During June, 57 singing Clay-colored Sparrows were detected during a survey near Chelmsford, *Sudbury*, (JNi). A territorial male **Lark Sparrow** was at the DeLaurier Trail, *Pelee*, 2–4 Jun (AW et al.). Three reports of the endangered Henslow's Sparrow are encouraging. Two territorial males were at Bronte P.P., *Halton*, in early Jun (GE, MCr), one was at Regional Road 9 one-half mi n. of Hagersville, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, 3 Jul (JBM, WS), and one was singing at Glen Major, *Durham*, 10 Jul (FB). At least 3 pairs of Le Conte's Sparrows were in the Burwash, *Manitoulin*, area in Jun (m.ob.), 3 individuals were at Azilda, *Manitoulin*, in Jun (JNi), and one was at Bidwell, *Manitoulin*, 22 Jun (CB). An unusual irruption of Dickcissels occurred in sw Ontario during the period. Up to 30 ad birds were present in five colonies in fields near Blenheim, *Chatham-Kent*, from 18 Jun–27 Jul (JTB et al.). Although breeding appeared to have been successful, no fledged young were found (JTB). Four birds were at Fifty Pt. C.A., *Niagara*, from 26 Jun on (BMk, SMk), and one territorial male was se of Hagersville, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, from 23 Jun on (RC). Dickcissels were also at Holt Line, South Lambton, *Lambton*, (BAM) 31 Jul. For unknown reasons Western Meadowlarks have become scarce this summer in nw. Ontario (DE). A single bird was at Clappison's Corners, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, 9 Jun–1 Jul (BSm, m.ob.), another was at the Blenheim S.T.P., *Kent*, during the last week of July, and another was at Killaly Rd. and Highbury, London, *Middlesex*, (KG). Eight Orchard Orioles were

present 1–17 Jun (m.ob.) in the L.P.B.O. area. In Toronto 1 imm. bird was at Lambton Park 19 Jun (BY) and a singing ad. male was at High Park 21 Jun (BY). A pair successfully raised young at a residence near Presqu'île (FH, TH). There were 2 Orchard Orioles near Strathroy, *Middlesex*, one 17 Jun and another in late Jul (PR, DMa, RoS). Two family groups were at Woodstock, *Oxford*, 27 Jun (JMH). A pair of House Finches, still scarce in the n., visited a feeder in Thunder Bay 12 Jul (BM). Several Common Redpolls were late at Slate Falls, *Thunder Bay*, 7 Jun (DTr).

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# appalachia



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**T**he drought conditions that had prevailed over much of the Region during the past few seasons finally broke, providing the area with a cooler and wetter summer than normal. High water levels at most lakes and wetlands concentrated migrating shorebirds at a few managed impoundments where water levels had been drawn down. Among passerines, nesting productivity generally seemed high, although little quantitative data were available for most species. In some agricultural areas, frequent summer showers may have indirectly benefited the nesting success of grassland species due to the resulting delays in cutting the first hay crops. Following a trend observed over at least the past two decades, many species having more northerly distributions, including Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, as well as

wood-warblers such as Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Green and Blackburnian, were again found nesting farther south and at lower elevations than usual within the Region.

**Abbreviations:** Big South Fork (Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, KY/TN); P.N.R. (Powdermill Nature Reserve, Rector, Westmoreland, PA); P.I.S.P. (Presque Isle S.P., Erie, PA).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

There were only two reports of summering, non-breeding Common Loons in the Region, one at Nickajack L., *Marion*, TN, 25 Jun (CM), and another at Kahle L., *Venango*, PA, 16 Jul (JSt). Pied-billed Grebes were unusually widespread within traditional nesting areas of ne. Ohio and nw. Pennsylvania (v.o.); singles were at two sites along the Watauga R., TN, 16 Jul (RK), and one was on the Ohio R. at Williamstown, WV, 5 Jul (MS, AP, GH). A Horned Grebe was a rare out-of-season find at Prince Gallitzin S.P., PA, 8 Jun (BH). A newly discovered colony of Double-