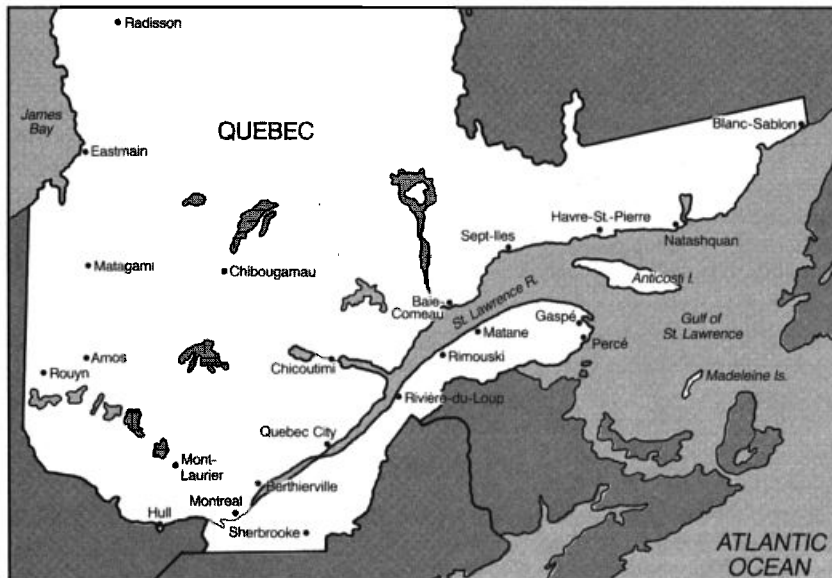


Québec



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This summer, most of the Region experienced temperatures above normal, the deviation from the normal being the most noticeable on the east coast of Hudson Bay, where the mean temperature was 5 degrees Fahrenheit above the norm. Most of the inhabited part of the Region had below-normal precipitation, most particularly the Abitibi region. Only the North Shore had normal or slightly above-normal precipitation. No severe weather conditions adversely affected the breeding season. The only natural phenome-

non with potential negative effects on the breeding of woodland species was a severe defoliation caused by the forest tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria* Hbn.) in the Abitibi region.

PELICANS THROUGH TERNS

Once again this summer, an American White Pelican visited the Region. Its huge size allowed the bird to be seen from different locales around the Lachine rapids 23 Jun–3 Jul, including Île des Soeurs, LaSalle, and Sainte-Catherine (PB, m. ob.). A pair of Least Bitterns at Saint-Fulgence 26–31 Jul+ provided a first record for the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region (S. Belleau, m. ob.). In the s., this threatened species was surprisingly well in evidence; the Saint-Timothée marsh continued to be its stronghold, as shown by the presence of at least six pairs (A. Hogue). Great Egrets continued to infiltrate s. Québec. In addition to 20 birds at the Saint-Timothée marsh (m. ob.), 8 were seen at Pointe à Comtois on the s. shore of Lake Saint-Pierre 29 Jul (ND, D. Jauvin), while 4 young flapping their wings from the top of high trees at Île aux Hérons 29 Jul confirmed breeding there for the 4th consecutive year (PB).

Enriching our knowledge of the breeding distribution of Turkey Vulture was a nest containing 2 young found at Beauceville in late Jul (D. Parent, K. Poulin, *vide* L. Tremblay). Single Greater White-fronted Geese at Victoriaville 5 Jun (R. Lacerte, J. Nadeau) and Baie-du-Febvre

9–10 Jun (*vide* S. Houle) were somewhat unseasonal. The number of Mute Swans was higher than usual in the Region. In addition to an ad. at Beauharnois throughout the period, 2 imms. were at Neuville 6 Jun (D. Cloutier), 2 at Cap-Tourmente NWR 10 Jun–10 Jul (*vide* JL; no age reported), one at Bergeronnes 31 Jul+ (E & V. Bouchard), and one 3 Jun–15 Jul at Lac-Kénogami, Métabetchouan, and Sainte-Monique, three locales of the e. part of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region. A female Ruddy Duck with 7 ducklings at Saint-Fulgence 25 Jul provided a first nesting record for the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region (R. Poulin, N. Gagné).

A serious candidate for “the Bird of the Year Award,” an ad. male **Mississippi Kite** was enjoyed by many observers at Amos, Abitibi 6–29 Jun (C. Béland, m. ob., ph. M. Lafleur). The Abitibi region, located 500 km nw. of Montréal, has now provided Québec with three new species in the last four years, including a White-faced Ibis in 1997 and a Common Crane in 1999. The presence of ad. Bald Eagles in increasing numbers in the Estrie region might herald future nesting s. of the St. Lawrence R. Summering Rough-legged Hawks were abnormally common all along the St. Lawrence valley throughout the period. Single ad. Golden Eagles made untimely appearances at Gracefield 9 Jun (D. St-H et al) and Hébertville 13 Jul (M. Tremblay, D. Gervais).

A pair of Sandhill Cranes with a flightless young at Moffet 20 Jul represented a first breeding record for the Témiscamingue region (R. Roy, *vide* J. Fréchette), while a bird at Bryson 12 Jun was noteworthy so far s. (M. Lalancette, P. Houde). For the 2nd consecutive year, a pair of Willets nested at Dune du Nord, Îles de la Madeleine (DGG, CA. Gaudet, C. Roy). One Willet was found, of all places, along Selbaie Road, in the middle of the boreal forest 27 Jun, providing a 2nd record for the Abitibi region (P. Drapeau, *vide* R. Deschênes).

Always rare, an imm. Long-tailed Jaeger was spotted from the Trois-Pistoles ferry 14 Jun (CG, CA). Great Black-backed Gulls appeared to be doing well in the Montréal area, as evidenced by the four pairs successfully nesting at the Lachine rapids (PB, JC. Sorel). A new colony of Black-legged Kittiwakes comprised of 137 nests was discovered 24 Jun near Les Escoumins at the w. limit of the species's range (CG, J. Desbiens, A. Boily). Caspian Terns are increasingly common in summer in s. Québec, where peak counts were 7 at Longueuil 17 Jun, 12 off Île des Soeurs 23 Jun, 12 at Île Charron 2–18 Jul, 20 at Maple Grove 7 Jul, and 13 at Île

Grosbois 8 Jul (*vide* PB); smaller groups were scattered throughout the Region. An early juv. was at Maple Grove 22 Jul, but local breeding remains to be confirmed. Two ad. *Chlidonias* terns flying away from the observer at Île Charron, Boucherville 23 Jun were believed to be **White-winged Terns** (Y. Gauthier). Both birds exhibited immaculate white tail and rump as well as white upperwings, contrasting with black head and body. Unfortunately, the underwing pattern could not be seen. Although there are now six records in the province, this is the first sighting involving two ads.

OWLS THROUGH SPARROWS

The Barred Owl nested well e. of its normal range in the province, as shown by the presence of an ad. and a juv. 5 Jul at Mont-Sainte-Geneviève, 36 km e. of Havre-Saint-Pierre on the lower North Shore (Y. Rochepault, CB). In the wake of last winter's invasion, an ad. and 2 juv. Great Gray Owls were found 15 Jul in the Réserve faunique des Laurentides, well outside their normal breeding range (Y. Hamel, J. Desmeules). Also exceptional was a pair at Pointe-au-Père for most of Jul (J. Marcoux, S. Rhéaume, m. ob.).

A Red-headed Woodpecker reported at Sainte-Pétronille 29 Jun–1 Jul represented the northernmost sighting for the summer (C. Touzin). The Abitibi region was graced by a singing Sedge Wren at Arntfield 6–7 Jun, the first ever for the area (F. Bédard). Most probably related to the unprecedented movement of Northern Wheatears in Newfoundland last Spring, 2 males of this species were found at Grande-Entrée, Îles de la Madeleine 7 Jun (CT, ML). For a 3rd consecutive year, the Golden-winged Warbler was almost absent from the Region (*vide* SD); no breeding attempts were noted even at sites where it used to nest. It is hard to explain the "crash" of the species considering the relative health of its habitat and the absence of the competitive Blue-winged Warbler in the Region. A Clay-colored Sparrow hybridized with a Chipping Sparrow at Saint-Fidèle 1 Jun–4 Jul (M. Robert).

The first Vesper Sparrow in Îles de la Madeleine since 1978 made a brief appearance at Pointe-aux-Loups 18 Jun (CT, ML). A totally unexpected Grasshopper Sparrow at Val d'Espoir 20 Jun–22 Jul represented the first ever for the Gaspésie region (M. Larivée, O. Deruelle). In its normal range in the sw. regions, the species seems to be disappearing, mainly on account of habitat loss; nevertheless, a pair was found carrying food at Saint-Lazare 21 Jun (PB), and singles were located at Charteris and at Yarm in Pontiac region 15 Jul

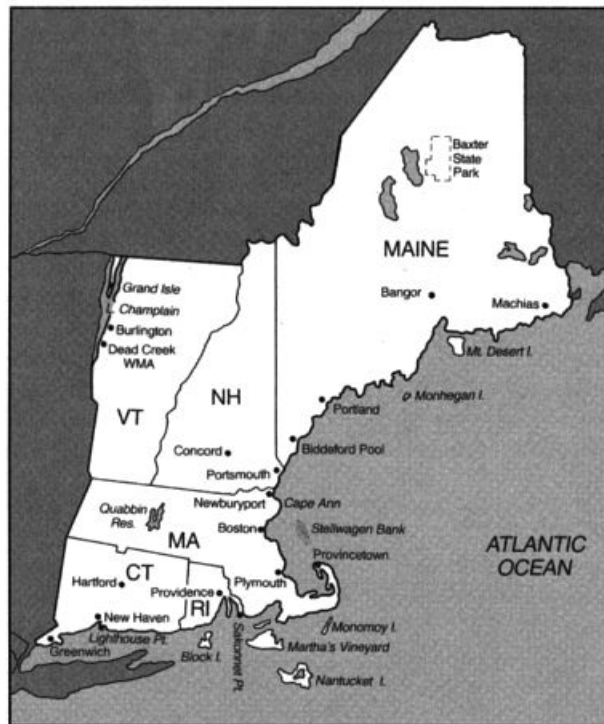
(D. St-H, G. Desjardins). Finally, Abitibi's first Lark Sparrow was a one-day wonder at Val-Senneville 21 Jun (S. Lehouiller).

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New England



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Weather during the period was relatively uneventful this year. June was notably sunny and warm, with temperatures averaging several degrees above normal in Boston, even though rainfall actually exceeded the average by almost 2 inches. Jul was also sunny, but the month was dry and very cool, with the temperature averaging nearly four degrees Fahrenheit below normal. There seemed to be little indication that weather during the period had any appreciable effect on breeding bird populations, unlike the rainy and snowy March that definitely impacted nesting success of early

breeders such as Bald Eagles and possibly several other raptor species.

A brief summary of Regional breeding-season highlights includes the discovery of a new nesting locality for Leach's Storm-Petrels at the extreme southern terminus of the species's breeding range in New England; further indication of the negative impact of nesting Double-crested Cormorants on colonial waterbird nesting sites; confirmation that Common Eiders have firmly consolidated their breeding range to include Boston Harbor; indications that gull-removal programs in Massachusetts are beginning to pay dividends for breeding terns; information that Boreal Owls nested in northern New England; and a reminder that Chuck-will's-widows still remain to be confirmed as a breeding species in New England.

In addition to the above, notable rarities in