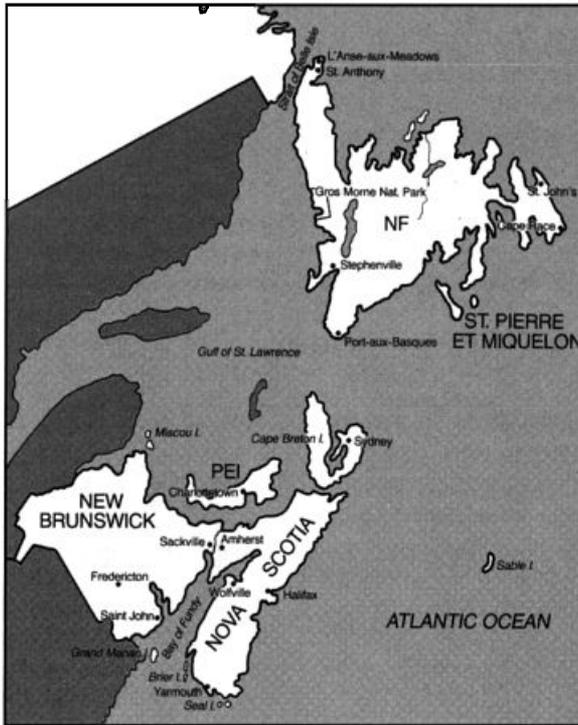


Atlantic Provinces



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It was a standard autumn with a plethora of vagrants and more interesting events than there is room in this column to touch upon. A Common Ringed Plover in Newfoundland and a Common Chaffinch in Nova Scotia were the two most exciting vagrants. New Brunswick had more routine rarities such as Ash-throated Flycatcher and Fork-tailed Flycatcher. A late-autumn Rufous Hummingbird, still very rare in the Region, was in Nova Scotia. The most spectacular migration witnessed was a huge movement of Black-capped Chickadees.

Abbreviations: C.S.I (Cape Sable Island, Nova Scotia); G.M.I. (Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick).

LOONS THROUGH RAILS

The highest of several good counts of Red-throated Loons in loon-rich Northumberland Strait was 120 on 5 Nov at Waterside P.P., Pictou, NS (KM). Northern Fulmars, taken for granted in much of the Region, were a treat for pelagic trippers off G.M.I., NB 28 Sep (ST et al.). There were still 12 Greater Shearwaters off

G.M.I., NB on the late date of 26 Nov (DG). There was a high count of 60 Manx Shearwaters off G.M.I., NB 9 Aug (LM). An astounding 25,000 Wilson's Storm-Petrels were present in the Grand Manan Basin, NB 20 Aug (BD). A late and lost Leach's Storm-Petrel was alive at Buchans in the center of Newfoundland on 22 Nov (DBu). There was a good influx of Great Egrets into the Region, with 26 reports including 15 from Nova Scotia in Oct. The only Little Blue Heron was at Guysborough Harbour, NS 18 Sep (*vide* RK). The Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland received the brunt of the annual late autumn influx of Cattle Egrets, with 8 out of the 15 reported across the Region. Reports of imm. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were: singles at Bancroft Pt, G.M.I., NB 16 Oct (BD); Glace Bay, NS 3-13 Aug (CM et al.); Sober I., NS 2-8 Sep (*vide* KM) and St. Pierre, SPM 12 Aug (PA). A rare autumn Glossy Ibis was on at Cherry Hill Beach, NS 20 Oct (JH).

Digby Neck, NS had the highest concentrations of Turkey Vultures, with an impressive 25 on the late date of 26 Nov (JS). A Black Vulture was at a garbage dump in Guysborough, NS for the last week of Nov (SB).

Always a good find in the Region, this autumn's Greater White-fronted Geese were singles at a golf course in Cavendish, PEI 21

Oct (DS, EM) and one identified as the Greenland race *flavirostris* at Lakeville, Kings, NS 8 Nov+ (JT et al.). A Brant was out of range at Miquelon, SPM 5-6 Nov (Yvon Detcher, RE). A single ad. **Barnacle Goose** of unknown origin fed with a large flock of wild Canada Geese near Moncton, NB 3-28 Nov (ST et al.). It was a poor autumn for Eurasian Wigeon, with 3 in New Brunswick, 4 in Nova Scotia, and a mere 2 in Newfoundland. Six Redheads at Cavendish, PEI 21 Oct was a good count for this scarce migrant (DS). Twelve Tufted Ducks at St John's, NF during Nov constituted a new Regional high for a single location, but Eurasian Wigeon were scarce.

Two juv. Cooper's Hawks at E. Point, PEI 7 Sep were a provincial rarities (VL). Best days for Broad-winged Hawk at Brier I., NS were 115 on 18 Sep (TEP) and 200 on 30 Sep (MUN, RS). A very intriguing report of 3 Swainson's Hawks at East Pt., PEI was unfortunately not accompanied by details. New Brunswick had single Golden Eagles at Greens Pt. 18 Oct (BC) and at Mary's Pt. 19 Oct (DC). Single dark-morph Gyrfalcons, possibly same individual, were reported at St. Peters Bay on 2 Nov and 40 km away at East Pt. 19 Nov (VL).

Sandhill Cranes continue a gradual increase in the Region. This autumn, there were 2 at Havelock, NB 1-24 Oct (m. ob.), 4 at Truro, NS 2 Oct-5 Nov (m. ob.), with singles at Riverport, NS 13 Oct (*vide* SF), Port Clyde, NS 13 Oct (SH), and St. Anthony, NF late Nov+ (m. ob.)

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS

An ad. **Common Ringed Plover** was thoroughly studied and well documented with video and photographs at Bellevue Beach, Trinity Bay, NF 14-16 Aug (PL et al.). This represents only the 2nd confirmed record for the Region. The other was also an ad. in late Aug 1980 at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, NF. The abundance of Semipalmated Plover in Nova Scotia is for the most part unappreciated. High counts were 2000 at Cole Harbour, NS 10 Aug (BMy) and 1350 at Crescent Beach, NS 16 Aug (SC). American Oystercatcher is well known at C.S.I., NS, where a pair of breeding ads. and 2 offspring were last seen on 3 Sep (MN); however, an ad. **American Oystercatcher** in New Brunswick at Three Islands Harbour, G.M.I. on 2 Aug, found after persistent rumours of three in the area through Jul, indicates the species is exploring elsewhere in the Region (BD, PP, KE). An American Avocet at the causeway in Windsor, NS 21 Sep was about the 18th for the province (*vide* SF). A Marbled Godwit at Morien Bar, C.B.I., NS 15 Sep was far e. for this barely annual rarity (AM, CM)

Semipalmated Sandpiper totals from the Bay of Fundy staging sites were at normal numbers, with the highest count being 100,000 at Windsor Causeway on the late date of 5 Sep (BMy). A Semipalmated Sandpiper banded at Johnson Mills, NS on 28 Aug 1987 was recaptured at the same location on 16 Aug 2001—14 years later (PH)! Provincial totals of the regular but scarce shorebirds in the Region were as follows: Baird's Sandpiper: 10 in New Brunswick, 12 in Nova Scotia, and 3 in Prince Edward Island; Stilt Sandpiper: 10 in New Brunswick, 9 in Nova Scotia, and 2 in Newfoundland; Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 4 in New Brunswick, 10 in Nova Scotia, and 2 in Newfoundland.

Prince Edward Island accounted for 3 of the high Regional total of 4 Curlew Sandpipers, with singles at Covehead Harbour 24 Aug (RC), Souris 15 Sep (EM, DS), and 15 Sep Alexandra (EM, DS). In Newfoundland, there was a nicely photographed ad. at Cape Freels 4 Aug (PJ). The only Ruff was a juv. at the waterfowl park in Sackville, NB 7 Oct (DH). Typically earlier than the rest of the Region, the waterfowl park in Sackville, NB had a well-studied ad. Long-billed Dowitcher 3 Aug (ST et al.). A flock of 10 dowitchers at the same location on 4 Oct were all thought to be Long-billed Dowitchers (PP et al.). There were up to 2 at Daley Creek, NB 7 Oct-1 Nov (ST et al.). Far e. for the species were a juv. 8-9 Oct (AM, CM), and one ad. & one juv. 12 Nov were at Morien Bar, C.B.I., NS (SM). Wilson's Phalarope may soon become the genuine rarity it was three decades ago in the Region. There were only 6 reported, 3 in New Brunswick and 3 in Nova Scotia, including a late individual at Clark's Harbour 18 Oct (BMy, IM). A very late Red-necked Phalarope was at Broad Cove, NS 4-5 Nov (SF, BH). There were encouraging numbers of Red Phalaropes in the Bay of Fundy, with tens of thousands reported on the whale watching boat trips off Brier I., NS during Sep (Carl Haycock).

Great Skuas were widely reported, adding to a very recent trend of increasing autumn migrants in the Region. There was one on 15 Sep at Cape St. Francis, NF (KK, JW). Birders on the ferry between Digby, NS and Saint John, NB identified a single Great Skua on 4 Oct and 2 more on 12 Oct (Ken MacIntosh, RL). A good day for skuas was 7 Oct, with a Great Skua identified from land on Brier I., NS (FL) and another, plus 2 unidentified skuas, on the Avalon Pen., NF (DF et al.). Two late Great Skuas were seen from a boat off The Isthmus, SPM 3 Nov (LJ). The only jaeger report of any significance was a mix of 35 Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers off Cape St. Francis, NF after the passage of

Hurricane *Erin* on 15 Sep (KK, JW).

The only Laughing Gulls were one at Stratford, PEI 11-14 Aug (EM, DS) and one at Mactaquac, NB 1 Nov (Bev Schneider). Little Gulls reported were singles at Cape Brûlé, NB 2 Sep (Rose-Alma Mallet), The Whistle, G.M.I., NB 29 Sep (ad.; BD), St. Peter's Bay, PEI 8 Sep and 20 Nov (VL), Lower Rose Bay, Lunenburg, NS 29 Oct (JH), and Pictou Causeway, NS 3-5 Nov (KM). Single ad. Mew (Common) Gulls were at St. John's, NF 28 Oct+ (BMT) and Antigonish, NS 24 Nov (IM et al.). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported in good numbers comparable to recent years. The highest one-day counts from both Nova Scotia (4) and Prince Edward Island (10) were from farm fields—a habitat often overlooked by gull watchers in this Region. There were 3 Sabine's Gulls reported from New Brunswick: an ad. 6 Sep and a first-winter 8 Sep at The Whistle, G.M.I. (KE et al.) and a first-winter 27 Sep at Bouctouche Dune (DD). Caspian Terns are very local and site-specific in the Region. They are locally abundant, as attested by 150 at St. Peter's Bay PEI 8 Sep (VL). Eighty Razorbills at East Point, PEI 18 Nov was a good count for the province (VL).

DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

Three White-winged Doves for the season was par: one at Saint John, NB during the last week of Oct (F. Kelly), one at C.S.I., NS 25 Oct-12 Nov (*fide* MN), and one at Wood Islands, PEI 3-4 Sep, for a 2nd provincial record (EM, DS). Yellow-billed Cuckoo totals by province were: 7 New Brunswick, 15 Nova Scotia, and 5 Newfoundland. A significant influx of Snowy Owls was heralded by an early individual at C.S.I., NS 11 Oct, with at least 20 in that province by the end of the period (BMy). Similarly high numbers were found in all provinces starting in early Nov. An imm. male **Rufous Hummingbird** studied closely at Liscomb, NS 23 Oct-4 Nov was the 7th provincial record (Brian Wilson et al.). Red-headed Woodpeckers maintained a low-key presence, with one at Riverside, NB 4-30 Nov (N. Belliveau) and 3 late Oct feeder visitors in Nova Scotia. Three Red-bellied Woodpeckers reported in w. parts of the Region was below the season's recent norms.

An **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, identified in retrospect, was first seen at Jemseg, NB 25 Nov (Bev Schneider). The autumn had the first strong showing of Western Kingbird in years, with 14 birds in four provinces, 8 of which were present during part of Nov. Northeast New Brunswick had a monopoly on long-tailed flycatchers, with a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Lac Frye 11 Oct (RD et al.) and a

few km away on Miscou I. a **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** 7-16 Oct (G. Benoit).

Northern Shrikes were uncommon across the Region. All 4 White-eyed Vireos reported were observed in the classic period of occurrence in the Region of 20 Sep-10 Oct, with one banded at St. Andrews, NB 25 Sep (TD), one at Hartlen Point, NS 24 Sep (CSS), and singles at Brier I., NS 24 Sep (CLS) and 7 Oct (m. ob.) The only Yellow-throated Vireo was at St. Patrick's Rd, PEI (A. Gray).

SA There was a massive irruption of Black-capped Chickadees into New Brunswick and a hint of the movement in western Nova Scotia. Veteran New Brunswick birder Dave Christie summed it up: "movements of chickadees are noticeable here to some extent every autumn, but this year the numbers are remarkable, greater than any I can recall in previous years." The movement was heaviest in the last two weeks of September, when from his upper Bay of Fundy home at Mary's Point he witnessed thousands moving south and east. Spectacular counts of 885 in 20 minutes and 500 in 2 minutes are difficult to imagine.

Nova Scotia had its 9th and 10th Carolina Wrens, with individuals at Halifax 10 Oct-30 Nov (m. ob.) and another across the harbor in Dartmouth 18-30 Nov (m. ob.). A late House Wren was in Halifax 17-30 Nov (Terry Pacquet). Low-to-average numbers of vagrant Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were reported the usual vagrant-hunting areas in the Region. Outside of juveniles lingering into Aug at the new breeding site at Cape Pine, NF, Northern Wheatears reports were scant: one at Swallowtail, G.M.I., NB 16 Sep (BD), one at St. John's, NF 25 Sep (JS), 2 at Port Saunders, NF 27 Sep (John Gibbons), and one at Langlade, SPM 1 Sep (LJ, BL). Bohemian Waxwings trickled into New Brunswick starting in late Sep. They were widespread in New Brunswick in Oct and by Nov in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, with flocks of several hundred being frequent.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Perhaps the paucity of southwest winds during Sep was responsible for the uniform shortage of "southern" warbler vagrants at vagrant traps across the Region. Both Blue-winged Warblers were in Newfoundland: at Bear Cove 20 Sep (TB, DF) and at Cappahayden 30 Sep (IJ, MR). The rarer Golden-winged Warbler was at Portuguese Cove, NS 17 Sep (*fide* KM). The 3

Yellow-throated Warblers reported were all in late autumn, as expected: at The Hawk C.S.I., NS 26-27 Oct (JON, SAN), Saint John, NB 31 Oct (F. Kelly), and at a feeder in Tracadie, NB 24-30 Nov (R. Doiron). Prairie Warbler totals were 3 in New Brunswick and 13 in Nova Scotia, but none were seen in Newfoundland, where it is usually found. Despite the poor showing of southern warblers, there were 3 of the rare Cerulean Warbler: Brier I., NS 30 Aug (EM), Morien Bay, C.B.I., NS, 26 Sep (CM), and Cape Spear, NF 3-5 Sep (IJ et al.). There were no reports of Prothonotary, Worm-eating, or Kentucky Warblers. Five Hooded Warblers, however, was a strong appearance: a male at Blacks Harbour, NB 10 Nov (Ken McIntosh), a male at Cape Sable I., NS 18 Aug (*fide* BMy), a female at Brier I., NS 30 Aug (m. ob.), another at Hartlen Pt., NS 24 Sep (CLS), and a male at Schooner Pond, C.B.I., NS 20 Oct (RK). Yellow-breasted Chats were conspicuous in New Brunswick, with 8 reports, and in Nova Scotia, with 20+ individuals.

It was quite a season for late and rare tanagers. Summer Tanagers were at Brier I., NS in early Oct (m. ob.), Portuguese Cove, NS 9-12 Nov (*fide* BMy), and Campellton, NB 22-24 Nov (*fide* DC). A **Western Tanager** was in Halifax, NS on 22 Nov (IM). The most spectacular tanager report was a trio of tanagers—a **Western Tanager**, a Summer Tanager, and a Scarlet Tanager—frequenting one backyard at Canso, NS in late Nov, all documented with photographs (SB). A Scarlet Tanager was a rarity in St. John's, NF on 6 Nov (DBr). An Eastern Towhee was out of range in the cen. Newfoundland wilderness at Buchans on 18 Nov (DBu). There was an autumn total of 7 Clay-colored Sparrows: one in New Brunswick, 5 in Nova Scotia, and one in Newfoundland. The was an above-average Regional total of 10 Lark Sparrows divided between New Brunswick (2) and Nova Scotia (8). Most interesting among the above-average Regional total of 18 Blue Grosbeaks, was a rash of late-Nov birds: 2 at C.S.I., NS 28 Nov (MN), one at Louisbourg, NS 21 Nov (SM), one at L'Ardoise, NS in late Nov (Weldon MacPhail), and one at St. John's, NF 20 Nov (DBr). About 20 Dickcissels reported in the Region was close to average.

Just 2 Yellow-headed Blackbirds reported: an ad. male at Brier I., NS 28 Oct and one at Edgitts Landing, NB 20 Sep (*fide* DC). Brewer's Blackbirds reported with a few details were an ad. male at a feeder on G.M.I., NB 9-10 Oct (*fide* BD) and another compared with a Rusty Blackbird at a feeder at Sand L., C.B.I., NS 22 Nov (SM, AM, CM). An imm. male **Common Chaffinch** began a several week stay

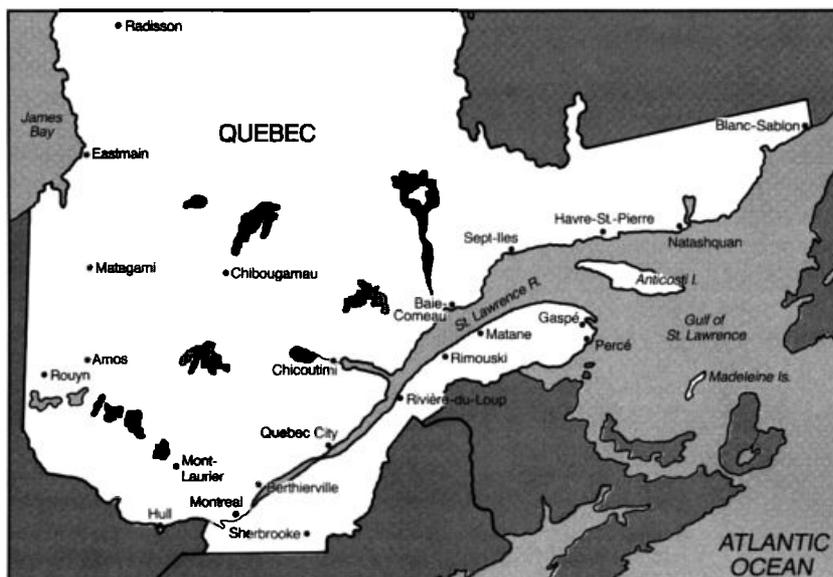
at a feeder in Bedford, NS on 27 Nov (Suzanne Borkowski, m. ob.). This is the 4th for Nova Scotia and at least the 6th for the Region. The question of origin is always a problem. It was a very good autumn for most finches across the Region. Particularly large flights of Common Redpoll and Pine Grosbeak were noted in New Brunswick.

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The province of Québec experienced yet another warm fall in 2001, while precipitation this season remained below average. As a consequence, water levels in the Upper St Lawrence River continued to be very low, with the resulting formation of large areas of suitable habitats for shorebirds. Ironically, it was one of the worse falls ever for shorebirds. Whether it was the case that the birds were more scattered throughout these newly-created habitats or that their low numbers were signs of actual problems remains unknown. Hawks and gulls also appeared to be in lower numbers than usual. Apart from this disturbing news, it was on the other hand an interesting season for stragglers. If one measures the quality of a season by the number of boldfaced bird names, it was indeed an excellent season, considering that Wood Stork, Common Crane, Rufous