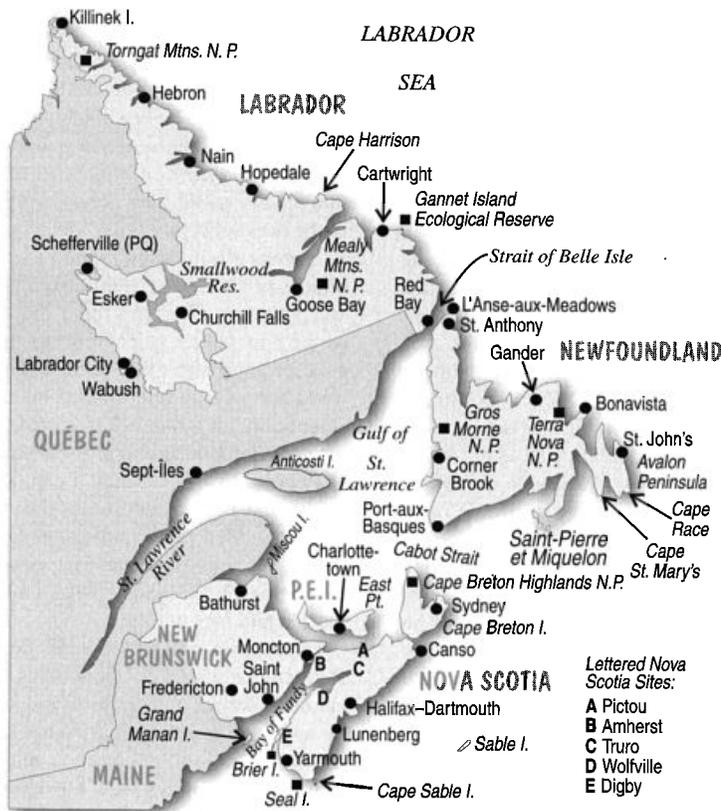


# Atlantic Provinces & St. Pierre et Miquelon



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Weather during the period was uneventful, although bird news was anything but: a heavy influx of Baird's Sandpipers, a massive movement of Red-bellied Woodpeckers into New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and exceptional counts of White-eyed Vireos and Cliff Swallows in the eastern half of the Region in October were all without precedent. Top rarities of the season were Wood Stork, Pacific Loon, and two Rufous Hummingbirds in New Brunswick, with White Ibis, Least Tern, Townsend's Warbler, and Painted Bunting in Nova Scotia.

Abbreviations: C.S.I. (Cape Sable I., NS); G.M.I. (Grand Manan I., NB); NF (insular Newfoundland, rather than the province of Newfoundland & Labrador, abbreviated NL).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

A Pacific Loon in faded breeding plumage at Gull Cove, G.M.I., NB 6-8 Oct represented the 4th provincial record (JWi et al.). Cory's Shearwater is remarkably rare in the cold waters of the Bay of Fundy, so 2 well observed among a flock of 200 Greater Shearwaters off the n. end of G.M.I. 15 Aug was noteworthy (Tom Rivers, *vide* BD). Ten thousand Greater Shearwaters flew southward past Cape Race, NF on the late date of 10 Nov (DS). Up to 50 Manx Shearwaters were feeding daily near shore at Portugal Cove South, NF during late Aug (DS). A Manx Shearwater flying past Cape Race, NF on 10 Nov afforded the latest record for Newfoundland and one of the latest for the Region (DS).

Southern herons are sufficiently widespread that not all sightings are reported.

Twenty-one Great Egrets were tallied (13 in New Brunswick, 8 in Nova Scotia), 3 Snowy Egrets (2 in New Brunswick, one in Nova Scotia), 8 Little Blue Herons (6 in Nova Scotia, 2 in St. Pierre et Miquelon), with one Tricolored Heron in Nova Scotia. Cattle Egrets totaled 10, with one in New Brunswick, 7 in Nova Scotia, and singles in St. Pierre and Newfoundland. Single Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were in Nova Scotia, St. Pierre, and Newfoundland. An ad. White Ibis roamed around w. Nova Scotia, with sightings at Tantallon 8-14 Aug (Suzanne Borkowski et al.), Clyde River 17 Sep (Sandy Hiltz), and C.S.I. 20 Oct (MN). An imm. Wood Stork was observed by many, including television cameras, during its stay at Musquash Marsh, Saint John, NB 7-15 Aug (Juliette & Jack Hickman et al.). This bird furnished the 3rd record for New Brunswick and the Region. The largest concentration of Turkey Vultures was 25 at Brier I., NS 8 Oct (*vide* UH).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

Single Greater White-fronted Geese, both thought to be returning birds from autumn 2003, were at Memramcook, NB 27 Oct-30 Nov (Yolanda Leblanc et al.) and Lakeville Kings, NS 30 Oct-12 Nov (JT et al.). The status of Cackling Goose in the Region remains to be clarified. A well-photographed individual was at Pokemouche, NB 4 Oct-12 Nov (Frank Branch, RR et al.). Another was substantiated with photographs at Windsor, NS 3 Oct (RS et al.). Eurasian Wigeon totals were 2 in Nova Scotia, 3 in St. Pierre et Miquelon, and 8 in Newfoundland. Gadwalls in the e. part of the Region, where still very rare, included singles at Mirande L., St. Pierre et Miquelon 29 Aug (FD) and Arnold's Cove 2 Oct-30 Nov (GS). The wintering Tufted Duck flock at St. John's, NF began arriving 19 Oct, with 4, which had grown to 9 by 27 Oct (BMt et al.).

Brier I., NS typically had the highest single-day counts of raptors, including 500 Sharp-shinned Hawks 28 Sep (EM), 1000+ Broad-winged Hawks 23 Sep (JUS), and 40 American Kestrels 8 Oct (FL). A weakened Purple Gallinule found at Pointe-Verte, NB 29 Oct was provided about the 20th provincial record (RG). The only Sandhill Crane report was of one at Upper Stewiacke 10-27 Sep (Don MacNeill et al.).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS

Four ad. and 3 juv. American Oystercatchers were the 2004 yield for C.S.I. (MN et al.). A late and rare American Avocet was at Grand Desert, NS 8-9 Nov (HT et al.). Details are scant on reports by visiting birders of Spotted Redshanks at Bouctouche, NB 24 Oct and River Bennett, Victoria NS 24 Aug. A late Upland Sandpiper was at C.S.I. 7 Oct (MN). A Eurasian Whimbrel was present at Canso, NS 27 Jul-6 Aug (TK), for one of few

**SA** It was *Melanerpes* madness. Red-headed Woodpeckers put in their best showing in years, with totals of 9 in New Brunswick and 7 in Nova Scotia, mainly in Oct/Nov. But it was the Red-bellied Woodpeckers that stole the show. Astronomical totals of **90** in New Brunswick (*vide* DG) and **40–45** in Nova Scotia (*vide* IM) were tallied. Others were reported in Prince Edward Island, but clear information is still lacking. Two were recorded in Newfoundland in Dec. The wave of Red-bellied Woodpeckers began in mid-Oct and continued unabated through Nov. Very few were recorded at the vagrant hotspots on the sw. corner of Nova Scotia. Birds reached the Cape Sable I. area later than in cen. parts of the province. This indicates a land route for most of the birds entering Nova Scotia. Only 2 Red-bellieds were reported on Cape Breton I., NS.

Regional reports. A Marbled Godwit at Big I., Pictou, NS 22 Aug–4 Sep was possibly the same bird as one reported there 25 Sep (KM; ED). Western Sandpiper reports were low except at C.S.I., where there were six reports of up to 3 individuals between 19 Aug and 9 Oct (MN et al.). There was an exceptional influx of Baird's Sandpiper in late Aug through early Sep, with at least 57 in Nova Scotia, an unprecedented 25 in Newfoundland (mostly on the Avalon Peninsula), 7 in New Brunswick, and one in St. Pierre et Miquelon. Moderate numbers of Stilt Sandpipers included 11 in New Brunswick and 7 in Nova Scotia. Provincial totals of Buff-breasted Sandpiper were one in New Brunswick, 10 in Nova Scotia, and 6 in Newfoundland. There were 8 Long-billed Dowitchers divided among five locations in New Brunswick 28 Aug–6 Oct and one in Nova Scotia. An unidentified dowitcher at Eddies Cove East, Northern Peninsula, NF on the late date of 21 Nov was likely the province's long overdue first Long-billed (John Gibbons). There was one report of Wilson's Phalarope each for New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland.

Skuas identified to species were a Great Skua and a South Polar Skua se. of G.M.I. 1–2 Sep (Durlan Ingersoll). Three Little Gulls were at Tracadie, NB 1 Sep (Ivy Austin et al.), and an ad. was at Merigomish, Pictou, NS 15 Nov (KM). There were just two reports of Laughing Gull: a juv. near Cape Race, NF 5 Sep (KK, BMT) and a single bird at Sable I., NS 15 Sep (ZL). An ad. Franklin's Gull was at Biscay Bay, NF 12 Sep (Mike Parmenter). Above-average counts of Black-headed Gull were detected in e. Newfoundland, with 100+ present in St. John's in early Nov (BMT). An early Mew Gull, presumably *canus*, was photographed at Dartmouth, NS 23 Sep (Bernard Burke); 4 were found on the Avalon Pen., NF during Nov (*vide* BMT). Lesser Black-backed Gulls continue to increase a little more every autumn. Twenty on farm fields in St. John's, NF 11 Oct was a record one-day count for the Region (BMT). Surprising inland appearances of Sabine's Gull included 2 on the Saint John

R., near Fredericton, NB 23 Aug (Gilles Beliveau) and another one at Mactaquac L., NB 28 Aug (Bev Schneider).

New Brunswick's 10th Forster's Tern was at Long Beach, G.M.I. 19 Aug (BMT); a late ad. was at Crescent Beach, NS 15–18 Nov (DC). An imm. Least Tern was carefully identified at Economy, NS 30 Aug (Francis Spalding).



After delighting birders at Musquash Marsh, New Brunswick 7–15 August 2004, this Wood Stork launched itself from a dead tree and flew high to the south, as witnessed here 15 August, never to be seen again. It furnished the third record for the New Brunswick and the Region. Photograph by Bruce Mactavish.

Black Tern is now rare during autumn migration in the Region, with the only report being of one at Windmill Bight, NF 3 Sep (Jytte Selno). Storm-related Dovekie counts on the Avalon Pen., NF included some 20,000 in one hour at Kelligrews 2 Nov (KK) and 6000 in one hour Cape Spear 26 Nov (IJ).

### DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

White-winged Doves are now so routine in the Region that were it not for their long-distance vagrancy, they would hardly warrant boldfacing. The autumn saw singles at Lamèque I., NB 4 Aug (Jude Larocque), Pointe-Verte, NB 24–30 Nov (RG), and at Canso, NS 12–15 Nov, that province's 30th report (TK). It was an average year for Yel-

low-billed Cuckoo reports (8 in New Brunswick, 13 in Nova Scotia, and 3 in Newfoundland). An unbanded juv. Boreal Owl at Cape Breton Highlands N.P., NS was thought to represent a 3rd brood raised in the area (*vide* IM). About 12 Snowy Owls were reported in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in Nov. A late Chimney Swift was at St. Pierre 8–9 Nov (*vide* RE); all such late individuals should be carefully scrutinized, as Vaux's (or possibly even other *Chaetura*) are conceivable vagrants to the Region. Ad. male Rufous Hummingbirds were photographed at South Musquash, NB 26 Aug (Charlotte McClusky) and St. Andrews, NB 10–11 Sep (Judy Scullion) for the 2nd and 3rd confirmed provincial records. A very late hummingbird thought to be a Ruby-throated was at Point La Nim, NB 17 Oct (Margaret Gallant-Doyle).

A Say's Phoebe was photographed on Miscou I., in ne. New Brunswick 25 Sep (RR). Ten Western Kingbirds (5 in New Brunswick, 4 in Nova Scotia, and one on St. Pierre) was more than in recent years. There was an extraordinary arrival of White-eyed Vireos in the s. reaches of the Region 17–19 Oct, with 6 in Nova Scotia and 2 in New Brunswick. Four others found in late Oct or early Nov most likely arrived during the same time period. The only Yellow-throated Vireo was photographed at St. Pierre 9 Oct (PA), providing a 3rd autumn record in the French islands. A Warbling Vireo in a stand of willows in St. John's, NF 11 Nov furnished the latest record for the Region (JWE). A late imm. Purple Martin at Ferryland, NF 16 Oct was critically identified (BM, KK, JWE).

Carolina Wren remains rare, with singles at Fredericton, NB 19 Oct (PP), North Head, G.M.I. 23 Nov (JWi), and Canso, NS 19 Oct (TK). It was a big year for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, with minimum totals of 15 in New Brunswick, 21 in Nova Scotia, and 2 in Newfoundland. The only Northern Wheatear was at Port Morien, C.B.I. 16–18 Sep (Bev Sarty, Geroge Crowell). Three autumn sight-

**SA** This season saw a phenomenal Oct movement of Cliff Swallows. For reasons unknown, there is an annual, albeit light, movement of Cliff Swallows in the Region during the first three weeks of Oct, more than a month after the local breeders have departed. However, the numbers observed this autumn were far above anything experienced in the past. On 6 Oct, a flock of 25 was at Canso, NS (TK). This alone would have surpassed any previous Oct flock in the Region. But at the same time an incredible 200+ were being seen at East Pt., Prince Edward Island (*vide* BMT). On 16 Oct, a loose feeding flock of 50–75 Cliffs was found at Cape Race, the se. extremity of Newfoundland (BMT, KK, JWE). This was five times the largest number of Cliff Swallows ever seen in one day in the province. And on 20 Oct, a Cliff Swallow landed on a fishing trawler 32 km sw. of Iceland! The source of these Cliff Swallows—and the mechanism triggering the exceptional numbers that ended up in Region—are subjects of speculation at this point. It should be noted that Cave Swallows were looked for, but so far the only reliable autumn sighting for the Region is the one at Pt. Lepreau, NB 3 Nov 2003.

ings of Townsend's Solitaire heralded a better-than-average winter for the species. Individuals were at St. Martins, NB 25 Oct (Nancy & Ted Sears), Jeddore, NS 27 Oct (Jan Foley), and Sable I., NS 29 Oct (ZL). It was the poorest autumn for Bohemian Waxwing in at least a decade.

### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Stray warblers in the Region were in keeping with recent seasons. Single Blue-winged Warblers were at The Whistle, G.M.I. 24 Aug (JWi) and Trepassey, NF 19 Sep (Jeff Harrison), while a Golden-winged was at The Whistle 23 Aug (JWi et al.). Most exciting was the discovery of a female **Townsend's Warbler** at the e. tip of Sable I., NS on the relatively early date of 22 Oct (ZL); most of the Region's autumn records are from Nov or Dec. There were single Yellow-throated Warblers at Net Pt., G.M.I. 1 Oct (Ron Steeves), Hartlen Pt., NS 14–24 Oct (FL et al.), and Halifax, NS 2 Nov (David Curry). It was a big year for Prairie Warblers, with minimal totals in each province being 15 in New Brunswick, 30 in Nova Scotia, and 12 in Newfoundland, most occurring mid-Aug–mid-Sep. Cerulean Warbler continues to be very rare, with an imm. male at Cappahayden, NF 2 Sep (TB et

al.) providing the only report. A Worm-eating Warbler was banded on Bon Portage I., NS 17 Oct (TF). Single Kentucky Warblers were at The Whistle in late Aug (Ken Edwards) and Powles Head, NF 19 Sep (DS). Connecticut Warbler was reported in Nova Scotia at Brier I. 30 Sep (James Hirtle) and C.S.I. 7 Oct (MN et al.). Hooded Warbler was well reported, with singles at Great Pond, G.M.I. 28 Aug (*vide* ST), on Sable I., NS 8 Aug (ZL), on Brier I., NS 1 Sep (LL), at Bear Cove, NF 12 Sep (JC), and at Cherry Hill Beach, NS 20 Sep (SF), while up to 4 frequented Hartlen Pt., NS 18–21 Oct (IM, FL). A Prothonotary Warbler at Bear Cove, NF 24–25 Oct furnished just the 7th provincial record (KK et al.). It was a paltry season for Yellow-breasted Chat, with a mere dozen reported across the Region.

The season's only Summer Tanager was on Bon Portage I., NS 17 Oct (TF). It was a typical year for Clay-colored Sparrow—5 in New Brunswick, 5 in Nova Scotia, and one in Newfoundland. A Vesper Sparrow at Langlade, St. Pierre 13 Oct provided a 5th local record (LJ). There were above-average numbers of Lark Sparrows in the Region, with 7 in both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia and 2 more in Newfoundland. At least 40

Dickcissels were reported across the Region. Newfoundland's 6th Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was near Cape Race 31 Oct (JWe et al.). Amazingly, not one Grasshopper Sparrow was found all fall. Blue Grosbeaks were found in typical autumn numbers, with 2 in New Brunswick and 5 in Nova Scotia. A juv. **Painted Bunting** was identified at Hartlen Pt., NS 15 Sep (IM). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were a little scare, with one each in New Brunswick, St. Pierre et Miquelon, and Newfoundland. A good cone crop in much of Region resulted in fair to good numbers of finches. White-winged Crossbills were particularly abundant in e. Newfoundland.

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**F**all temperatures were at least 1° C above normal for most of the Region, while precipitation was lower than normal. In general, fall birding was excellent, although migrating warblers were again