



Rudolf F. Koes • Peter Taylor

After an extremely wet summer, particularly in the southeast, dry and warm conditions prevailed over much of the Region until mid-November. The exception was central Manitoba, which experienced a return to heavy rains and attendant flooding in mid-September. Although the mountains of Alberta remained mild until the very end of November, the rest of the Region entered winter at mid-month, with very cold temperatures, and up to a meter of snow in southwestern Manitoba. Poor berry and cone crops, likely due to the wet growing season, resulted in a near-absence of winter finches. Large waders were prominent, especially in Manitoba, while best shorebird numbers came from Alberta. A Wood Stork, two alcids, an accommodating Anna's Hummingbird, and numerous lingering warblers provided some of the other highlights.

Abbreviations: Last Mountain (Last Mountain L. and Wildlife Refuge, SK); Whitewater (Whitewater Lake W.M.A., Manitoba).

GEESE THROUGH CORMORANT

Brant are very rarely observed by birders in s. Manitoba; most reports come from hunters. This fall, 3 were reported shot near Whitewater around 11 Nov; they were associating with Cackling Geese in a stubble field (*vide* CC, JC). A Cackling Goose at Winnipeg, MB 24 Nov remained into Dec, providing the first winter report for the province (PF et al.). Aerial surveys in Manitoba revealed 30 Trumpeter Swans, including 10 cygnets, at Riding Mountain N.P., and about 70 birds at Duck Mountain P.P. and other cen. and w. regions 1 Sep (TS), whereas surveys in the southeast 30 Aug did not reveal any birds (RBz, GBa).

More difficult to detect in fall than spring, a male Eurasian Wigeon was at High River, AB 10 Oct (RB), and a male Cinnamon Teal was at Swan Lake, MB 18 Sep (IM). Much rarer was Alberta's 3rd Common Eider at Pine Coulee Res., AB 20 Nov (D&TD). Also of note were 22 Surf Scoters at Tressle Bay, SK 29

Sep (BL) and 5 Black Scoters at Last Mountain 27 Oct (BL). Bufflehead peaked at 2500 at Pine Coulee Res. 4 Nov (TK). Single male Barrow's Goldeneyes were noted at Last Mountain 18–31 Oct, at Buffalo Pound, SK 30 Oct, and at Pasqua L., SK 21 Nov (all BL). Willow Ptarmigan were abundant in the Churchill, MB area mid- to late Oct, possibly related to rabies-decimated fox populations (RKn), whereas the extremely wet summer probably accounted for low Sharp-tailed Grouse numbers in sw. Manitoba (CC).

Lone Red-throated Loons at Natalie L. 1 Nov (GB, JW) and Lac du Bonnet 30 Nov–1 Dec (ph. PT) were rarities for s. Manitoba, the latter providing the province's latest date ever. Also notable were a Pacific Loon at Last

(JR, RW). The fall Golden Eagle count at Mt Lorette, AB was 3949, slightly above the 1993–2004 average, and included a good number of juvs. (PS et al.). A large slough near Grosse Isle, MB attracted 15+ Soras 3 Aug (KG), and 7000 American Coots massed at Clear L., AB 2 Oct (TK). A Sandhill Crane at Delta, MB 11 Nov was late (LdM et al.), and 3 Whooping Cranes at the outskirts of Saskatoon, SK drew attention 11 Nov (M&SL).

Shorebird highlights included up to 4 Black-necked Stilts at Bradwell Res., SK (BW m.ob.) 15 Aug, 9 late American Avocets at Oak Hammock Marsh, MB 23 Oct (CA, LV), 350 Marbled Godwits at Clear L. 13 Aug (TK), 12+ Red Knots near N. Shoal L., MB 27 Oct (KG), and 1000 Semipalmated Sand-

SA The Everglades came northward this year: egret numbers in Manitoba were unprecedented! Great Egrets are known to have only one long-standing colony in the province, at Dog L., but repeated sightings of up to 10 near Woodlands (R&IP, JT et al.) suggested breeding this year at the rain-swollen Shoal Lakes. At least 9 frequented Whitewater, up to 18 were seen near Brandon, and there were numerous records of 1–5 birds from the Souris R. in the sw. to Lac du Bonnet in the e., mostly in Aug and Sep, with a straggler at Winnipeg 13 Oct (L&RJ). Four Saskatchewan reports included 3 at Wadena 28 Aug (KK), while the last of 4 young fledged from a St. Albert, AB nest 17 Sep (*vide* SG).

Snowy Egret, historically an occasional visitor to the Region, was represented by at least 8 birds in Manitoba, including 4 at Whitewater 11 Sep (LV, CA), plus one at Laura, SK 13 Oct (GW) and a possible individual at Last Mountain L. 5 Sep (SW). Cattle Egret numbers kept growing from several recent high years, with unprecedented counts of 315 in the Maple Lake and Oak Lake area, MB 26 Aug (RK, PT), where nesting was finally confirmed (RBz et al.), and 292 at Whitewater 7 Sep (R&TW), where breeding is strongly suspected. Smaller numbers occurred e. to Oak Hammock Marsh, and it is realistic to think there were 1000+ Cattle Egrets in Manitoba this season. Farther w., several nests were found this summer at Stalwart Marsh, SK (DS).

The normally common Great Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and American Bittern were also especially conspicuous where receding summer floodwater provided excellent fishing and frogging in farmland and along drainage ditches. Few other s. herons were reported, but up to 2 ad. and 2 imm. **Little Blue Herons** frequented a pasture near Oak L. mid-Aug–3 Sep (DH, m.ob.), and a Green Heron visited Winnipeg 13 Aug (GG, JG, m.ob., ph. MWa). *Plegadis* ibises also made news at Whitewater, as they have for several years now and where they bred this summer. A peak of 17+ White-faced Ibis was reported there 14 Sep (RP, m.ob.), with stragglers into Nov (*vide* JC), while up to 2 **Glossy Ibis** were closely studied by many observers 3–14 Sep (GG, RP et al.). Thirty-five White-faced Ibis constituted an excellent count at Frank L., AB 5 Sep (RC). Best of all was a juv. **Wood Stork** at St. Ambrose 5 Aug (NR, ph.), a first not only for Manitoba but for the whole of the Region.



These 48 Cattle Egrets were photographed 19 September 2005 near Boissevain, Manitoba. Unlike in many parts of the American East, where Cattle Egret numbers are declining, counts of the species have increased notably in recent years in Manitoba. Photograph by Blake Maybank.

Mountain 29 Sep (BL) and 6 Pacific and 91 Common Loons migrating at Glenmore Res., AB 20 Oct (JR, RW). A Double-crested Cormorant was a rarity at Churchill 28 Oct and a late one at that (ME et al.).

HAWKS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Taking advantage of the same approaching cold front as the loons, 108 Rough-legged Hawks migrated past Glenmore Res. 20 Oct

pipers at Strathmore, AB 12 Aug (TK). A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**, briefly present at Oak Hammock Marsh 30 Aug, provided only the 2nd report for Manitoba (RS, MH), whereas in Alberta one at Strathmore 9 Aug (AB, RL) and 3 at Langdon Res. 30 Sep–1 Oct (JR, MWe, RW) were more expected. Note-worthy high counts were provided by 40 Purple Sandpipers at Halfway Pt., near Churchill, 22 Oct (RKn), 800 Stilt Sandpipers at Irr-



This juvenile Wood Stork was photographed at St. Am-
broise, Manitoba on 5 August 2005. A first for the Prairie
Provinces region, it was unfortunately not reported until
several months later. Photograph by Norbert Riezing.

cana, AB 12 Aug (TK), 15,000 dowitchers at
Reed L. SK 17 Sep (TK), 5000 Long-billed
Dowitchers at Langdon Res. 30 Sep (RW),
and 100+ Wilson's Snipe at a weedy, partially
flooded field near Boissevain, MB 14 Sep
(CC).

Only 3 Parasitic Jaegers were reported in
Alberta 17–25 Sep (TH, IH, TK), and none
were reported elsewhere inland. Although
gull migration was generally described as
poor in the south, there were several notable
reports: Last Mountain attracted 25,000
Franklin's Gulls 9 Aug (GK); a Little Gull vis-
ited Tyrrell L., AB 9 Oct (D&TD); eight re-
ports of Mew Gulls at Calgary 3 Sep–16 Nov
involved 11 birds (RWO, MM, m.ob.); a sec-
ond-year Lesser Black-backed Gull was at
Gimli, MB 16 Sep (TK); and a Glaucous-
winged Gull was seen at Lac La Biche, AB 13
Oct (RKL). Two Sabine's Gulls graced Red-
berry L., SK (SS, BW), while five reports came
in from Calgary 4 Sep–26 Oct (m.ob.), and a



One of two extremely rare alcids in the Prairie Provinces re-
gion in autumn 2005, this Black Guillemot at Regina Beach
26–29 (here 26) November 2005 provided the second record
of the species for Saskatchewan. Photograph by Jared Clarke.

juv. Black-legged Kittiwake strayed to Cold
L., AB 1 Nov (RKL). Extremely rare were
Saskatchewan's 2nd Black Guillemot, a juv. at
Regina Beach 26–29 Nov (GW, m.ob., ph.),
and Alberta's 2nd Long-billed Murrelet near
Jasper N.P. 8 Aug (fide MB).

Snowy Owl numbers were good across s.

Manitoba and Saskatchewan and included a
high percentage of juvs. (m.ob.). Northern
Hawk Owls started to appear mid-Nov in s.
Manitoba, as did a few Great Gray Owls
(m.ob.). A cooperative imm. Anna's Humming-
bird remained at High River, AB 27 Oct–18
Nov (SSL, m.ob., ph. TK et al.), and another
was apparently photographed near Red Deer,
AB 3 Oct (fide MM). A Yellow-bellied Sap-
sucker at Shepard, AB 21 Oct was late (TK).

PASSERINES

Reports of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher 21 Aug
(PB) and a Western Scrub-Jay 1 Oct (RR),
both at Calgary, were not confirmed. Mani-
toba's 5th report of Violet-green Swallow
came from Pinawa 14 Aug (ph. PT). Boreal

ual Cape Mays in Alberta between late Oct
and early Dec; none appeared to survive be-
yond mid-Dec. Also late at Winnipeg were a
Black-throated Blue Warbler 18 Nov (JC,
*Manitoba Museum) and an American Red-
start 21 Oct (CA). A probable Black-throated
Blue Warbler was at Winnipeg 13 Sep (TK).
Rarest was a Yellow-throated Warbler at
Saskatoon 19–22 Aug, only the 3rd or 4th for
Saskatchewan (BW, m.ob.). An imm. Golden-
crowned Sparrow visited Calgary 1–2 Oct
(GY, m.ob.). Brown-headed Cowbird and
House Sparrow in late Jul–early Aug were
both firsts for Seal River in n. Manitoba (DFa).

Observers (provincial compilers in boldface):
C. Artuso, G. Ball (GBa), R. Barclay, K. Barker,



With only a handful of previous records of the species in Alberta, this immature Anna's Hummingbird, present at High River from
late October through 18 (here 11) November 2005, was visited and documented by many birders. Photograph by Terry Korolyk.

Chickadees staged a minor movement out of
the boreal forest: one was banded at Delta in
late Sep (HdH), one was at Winnipeg 3 Nov
(DD, IW), probably the same bird was nearby
10 Nov (RP), and four Saskatchewan reports
1 Oct–26 Nov came from Regina Beach, the
Indian Head area, and Melville (m.ob.). A
Carolina Wren at Delta, first seen about 24
Aug and banded 27 Aug, remained into Dec,
but it proved elusive and was seen only by a
lucky few (HdH, m.ob.). An above-average 4
Townsend's Solitaires were noted in Manitoba
2 Oct–20 Nov (m.ob.). A Gray Catbird was
photographed in the snow s. of Churchill 8
Nov (DR); similarly late was another at Mt.
Lorette 12 Nov (CH, KB). An American Pipit
was tardy at Oak L. 11 Nov (CC, MR, MY).

An Orange-crowned Warbler at a Lorette
suet feeder from 11 Nov into winter was
record-late for Manitoba (MW, ph.). Three
Chestnut-sided Warbler reports from Calgary
were more than normal (D&LF, m.ob.). More
late warblers were a Cape May at Winnipeg
14–15 Nov (EL, ph.) and at least 20 individ-

R. Bazin (RBz), A. Borgardt, M. Bradley, G.
Budyk, P. Bush, J. Christie, R. Clarke, C.
Cuthbert, D. Danyluk, L. de March, H. den
Haan, D. & T. Dolman, M. Elliott, D. Fast
(DFa), P. Fast, D. & L. Flynn, K. Gardner, S.
Gosche, G. Grief, J. Grief, I. Halladay, C.
Hansen, M. Harrison, D. Hatch, T. Hind-
march, L. & R. Jansson, R. Klauke (RKL), R.
Knapton (RKn), R. Koes, T. Korolyk, K. Kozij,
G. Krätzig, E. Lavender, R. Lein, M. & S.
Lewis, B. Luterbach, I. McLaren, M. Mulligan,
R. Parsons, R. & I. Porteus, D. Raitt, M.
Reid, J. Riddell, N. Riezing, R. Rouchle, T. Sal-
lows, D. Sawatzky, S. Shadick, P. Sherrington,
S. Slade (SSI), R. Storms, P. Taylor, J.
Townsend, L. Veelma, M. Waldron (MWa), G.
Wapple, I. Ward, J. Weier, S. Weir, R. & T.
Will, M. Wershler (MWe), R. Wershler, B.
Wilson, M. Wojnowski, R. Worona (RWO), G.
Yaki, M. Yorke. 🌐

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