



## ONTARIO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

Number 11

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The winter season is fast coming to a close and, with it, birders are looking forward to the spring migration and inevitable "bird chases" that go hand in hand.

OFO Special Publication #1: As you will remember, OFO undertook the production of this special publication to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the publication of McIlwraith's "Birds Of Ontario". The production of the book is going well and most authors are meeting deadlines imposed by the editors. As the original title was somewhat cumbersome, a new title has been chosen. The book will simply be called "Ornithology in Ontario". In each chapter a given topic will be discussed with respect to its role in the development of Ornithology in Ontario: - Ch. 1 - Historical overview - Jack Cranmer-Byng and Martin McNicholl - must wait until all contributions are in. Ch. 2 - Pre-history - Doug Sadler - partially submitted. Ch. 3 - Hudson Bay - Stuart Houston - completed and submitted. Ch. 4 - Early History: South - Dan Brunton - other authors (contributors) welcomed. Ch. 6 - Birding - Gerry Bennett - nearly completed. Ch. 7 - Point Pelee - Tom Hince, with assistance from Cranmer-Byng. Ch. 8 - Expeditions/Museums - Ross James. Ch. 9 - Oologists - George Peck and Jim Richards - in progress. Ch. 10 - Science of Ornithology - Author not yet confirmed. Ch. 11 - Banding & Bird Observatories - Seeking author (perhaps McNicholl). Ch. 12 - Cooperative Studies - Author not yet confirmed. Ch. 13 - Federal & Provincial Gov'ts. - Hugh Boyd and Harry Lumsden. Ch. 14 - Biographies - to date the following Ontario ornithologists have been chosen: T. Shortt, M. Mitchell, H. Lloyd, J.H. Fleming, G.R. White, L.L. Snyder, W.E. Saunders, L.S. Dear. Ch. 15 - Species showing significant change in status - to date the following species have been chosen: Pileated Woodpecker, House Finch, Gadwall, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, Little Gull, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Bluebird, Evening Grosbeak. If you have comments or information which you think may fit into any of these chapters, please contact Dr. Martin K. McNicholl, LPBO, Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0, or Jack Cranmer-Byng, 27 Idleswift Dr., Thornhill, Ont. L4J 1K9.

OFO Trophy for Bird-A-Thon Participants: OFO sponsored a trophy for the first time in 1986, to be awarded jointly to the birder who, individually, raised the most amount of money and, to the birder who saw the most species on Bird-A-Thon day. The winners of the first award are Tom Hince, with 165 species identified and Fred Helleiner who raised \$1,237.48.

In the past we have tried to keep members informed of the results of some of our field trips. In 1986 several trips were held, particularly in the fall of the year. The adventures encountered for some of these have been previously reported. In September OFO took its second trip to the Moosonee area. From the 19th to the 22nd 11 members birded this area of Boreal Forest and Coastal Tidewater. On arrival in Moosonee, we attended the 1st meeting of the newly formed Moose River Nature Club, with Mr. Sylfest Muldal. There, we were treated to an excellent slide presentation of Moosonee & Northern Ontario, by Dr. Ken Abraham. Steve LaForest of the Pickering Naturalists took part in the program, presenting our northern friends with a slide show of birds & birding hotspots in southern Ontario. The weather conditions were enjoyable

for the most part. In the '83 visit 22 OFO members observed 108 species, while this year 11 members counted 106. The highlight of the trip was an immature Lark Sparrow found by Mark Jennings at Moose Factory. To our surprise, a Field Sparrow and a juvenile Northern Mockingbird were found as well in Moosonee. Other interesting finds included "Hoyt's" Horned Lark, and "Gambell's" White-crowned Sparrow in Moosonee, and Black-throated Green Warbler, and Scarlet Tanager in Moose Factory. Observed at this late date as well were: Whimbrel, Alder Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow and Yellow Warbler. Common northern species seen included: Northern Goshawk, Merlin (a total of at least 11 birds) Spruce Grouse, Parasitic Jaeger, Northern Hawk-Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee (one flock of 42 birds in Moosonee), Bohemian Waxwing, LeConte's Sparrow, Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Lapland Longspur. Snow Geese were estimated at 5,000 while only 1 Sandhill Crane was observed. Eleven species of warblers were recorded, along with a numerous variety of shorebirds on the mud-flats of Ship Sands Island, including large numbers of juvenile Lesser Golden Plover, a few Hudsonian Godwit, and 20 or so White-rumped Sandpipers. Our thanks go out to the Moose River Nature Club for their hospitality (thanks to Kayo Ray for his trip report).

On Oct. 26, 1986 Bob Yukich led a trip to the Western Toronto Waterfront. Nine birders observed a total of 46 species. Included among the expected commoner species were a Snow (Blue) Goose at Marie Curtis Park, 900 Lesser Scaup just west of there and Black & Surf Scoters, 50 Northern Shovelers and a Saw-Whet Owl at High Park added spice to the day.

In late November 61 birders travelled through the Niagara Gorge looking for the specialties of the area. A total of 66 species were found, under the direction of the leader, Glenn Coady. Among the thousands of common ducks and gulls the group managed to find several rarer species, including a male and female King Eider (is that a King & Queen Eider, then?); 3 first-winter Franklin's Gulls; 1 Common Black-headed Gull; 1 Lesser Black-backed Gull; 1 first-winter Thayer's Gull; 2 Iceland Gulls; 2 Glaucous Gulls; 1 first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake; 12 Little Gulls; and 4 Purple Sandpipers. In addition to these, the group saw a flock of 3,000 Canvasbacks; 3 Tufted Titmice and a Carolina Wren. Considering the success of this year's outings we will probably have 600 people next year.

The Spring meeting will be held in the Long Point area this year from June 5th to 7th '87 - abandoning Pelee for the first time in OFO's history. A tentative agenda has been developed, but considering the early date of this announcement certain items and speakers are yet to be confirmed. However, it is known that birders are requested to meet at 8 p.m. at the Group Campsite, Turkey Point Provincial Park for a general orientation and talk on local birding. At 6 a.m. on Saturday morning leaders and birders will meet at the park gate and look for Carolinian Norfolk County Birds. At 1 p.m. the Long Point Bird Observatory has agreed to give a bird-banding demonstration and a tour of the Long Point facilities. Evening speakers, yet to be confirmed, will give presentations commencing at 8 p.m. On Sunday morning another early morning walk will look at Boreal Norfolk birds. The final walk of the week-end will take place early Sunday afternoon and focus on wetland birds. Expected species include Prothonotary and Hooded Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrushes, Chuck-Will's-Widows, Barred Owls and, hopefully, Acadian Flycatchers. As this is an extremely popular area we anticipate a large number of birders and would encourage interested people to register in advance as soon as forthcoming announcements so request.

The Board of Directors announced previously that OFO is undertaking the task of becoming incorporated. According to the Constitution and the Rules of Incorporation, at least 25 members of OFO must be present to ratify this procedure. This will serve as your formal notification of the ratification vote, as part of the spring meeting at Long Point.

The new executive for 1987 has now been elected and includes the following positions:

President	Chip Weseloh
Editor, Ontario Birds	Don Fraser
Editor, Newsletter	Geoff Carpentier
Treasurer	Hugh Currie
Special Projects & Publicity	- Victoria Carley and - Ron Scovell
Membership	Reid Wilson
V.P. -Fundraising	Glenn Coady
Secretary	John McCracken
Field Trips	Margaret Bain
OBRC Representative	Bob Curry

Our thanks go out to Linda Weseloh and Luc Fazio who are retiring from the Board. We welcome a long-time birder to our ranks, Ron Scovell.

Don Sutherland and Theo Hofmann have voluntarily made a contribution in the amount of OFO's Annual Membership fee to the Club. Don and Theo are founding members and, as such, would not normally pay annual dues. Their generosity is certainly appreciated and other life members are encouraged to give similar donations to help OFO offset their current deficit.

Field Trips: The schedule of field trips for 1987 has now been developed. April 25th - Prince Edward Point - meet at 8 a.m. in Picton at the Canadian Tire parking lot on Hwy. 33 on the west side of town. Trip will visit Prince Edward Pt., Little Bluff C.A., Macaulay Mountain C.A., and Big Island Marsh. Leader is Terry Sprague, 613-476-5072. July (date not settled) - Bruce Peninsula for Bluebirds and Sandhill Cranes with Dave Fidler and Tom Hilditch. August (date not settled) Pembroke Swallows. Oct. 24 & 25 - AGM - Niagara Falls. Details to follow. Nov. 1 - Sarnia for Jaegers with Dennis Rupert. Details to follow. Nov. 24 - Niagara - Gulls. December (date not settled) - Petroglyphs for Eagles.

Books Available for Review: Bill Crins advised that he has, or soon will have, the following books available for review: Ornithology in Laboratory & Field, ed. 5 - Pettingill & Breckenridge; Audubon Society Guide to Attracting Birds - Kress; Nothing Gold Can Stay: The Wildlife of Upper Canada - Sandercombe; The Starling - Feare; Blackbirds of the Americas - Orians; Bird Conservation, 2 - Temple. Prospective reviewers are requested to contact Bill through OFO's mailing address, specifying the preferred title. Books are allotted on a 'first come-first serve' basis and Bill advises that he cannot offer any guarantees that he will get the book of choice or that all books will, in actuality, be available.

In Memorium: It is with regret that we announce the passing this past summer of a long time friend and founding member of OFO, Mr. Frank H. Bell of Ottawa.

**Calls for Information: 1) Volunteer Birder(s) Wanted - Presqu'ile Provincial Park** wants to hear from anyone interested in birding the park this spring (late April - May) on a volunteer basis. The park will provide free accomodation and a \$60./week meal allowance. The volunteer will be expected to bird the park a minimum of 5 days/week (including most weekends), check the sightings book regularly, attempt to verify unusual reports, assist birders by answering questions, keep accurate daily field notes and lead some weekend hikes. A minimum commitment of 2 weeks is desiriable. Applicants should be able to communicate well with visiting birders of all experience levels and have an advanced knowledge in the identification and migration timing of Ontario's birds. For further information, please write or phone Doug McRae, Head Naturalist, Presqu'ile Provincial Park, R. R. #4, Brighton, Ont. K0K 1H0 (613-476-2204).

**2) New York Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit** has been working with several American and Canadian agencies to map the migrational patterns of eastern Canada Goose populations, either on the breeding grounds or the wintering grounds. Different coloured neckbands are used, depending on the location. In Ontario one can reasonably expect to find birds with either yellow neckbands and black letters; blue neckbands with white letters or orange neckbands with white letters. Individuals observing such birds should record the color combination and numerical/letter code on the band and whatever other details seem relevant. These should be sent to the New York Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, Dept. of Natural Resources, Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853. Interestingly, some of these geese were noted in the Peterborough area in late 1986. One of the individuals seen there was observed in January, with the Whitby wintering flocks.

**Rare Bird Hot Lines:** Requests have been made for an inventory of available Rare Bird contacts in the Province. To this end the following information has been confirmed. If members know of other numbers or contacts that should be included please contact the editor directly.

1. Windsor/Detroit 313-592-1811 - recorded message, updated every Wednesday a.m. Includes sightings from Michigan & Ontario, primarily.
2. Simcoe County & Muskoka - 705-325-6833 - recorded at irregular intervals, but never longer than 10 days.
3. Pickering 416-571-2261 - covers primarily Oshawa, Whitby & Ajax, but includes other Ontario birds of interest.
4. Toronto 416-481-7948 - Harry & Eileen Kerr collate information about Toronto and area birds and will accept calls from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. No collect calls please.
5. London - 519-672-2707 - Al McTavish organizes this hot line for local rarities.
6. Niagara-on-the Lake 416-468-3961 - Gord Bellerby will pass on information about Niagara rarities. In addition, Mary Ellen Foley 416-937-7671 collects information for the Niagara Peninsula and the Hamilton area.
7. Long Point Banding Station 519-286-2885 - George Wallace or the other banders will pass on news of the area except during the winter months. Respondents are asked to call after dark.
8. Point Pelee 519-322-2365 or 519-322-2371 - the interpretive staff will respond personally during working hours, but a recorded message may be used thereafter.

More Rare Bird Hot Line numbers next month! That's all for this month. Good birding.

Geoffrey Carpentier, Newsletter Editor, 964 Weller St., Peterborough, Ontario K9J 4Y2