

Articles

Ontario Bird Records Committee Report for 1991

by
Margaret Bain

This is the tenth annual report of the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) of the Ontario Field Ornithologists. A total of 125 records were received and reviewed by the Committee in 1991. Of these, 94 were accepted; two were not accepted on the grounds of debatable origin, and 24 were not accepted because of uncertainties regarding identification. Allowing for some duplications (for example, the White-winged Tern reports from Port Lambton and Long Point were originally submitted as two separate occurrences, but later

judged to pertain to the same bird), and a beautiful Harlequin Duck on the Spanish River, which on close inspection was just a few km south of the 47th parallel, this gives an acceptance rate of 78.5%. No historical records were reviewed in 1991.

Four new species were added to the Ontario list: White-winged Tern, Green Violet-ear, Black-capped Vireo and Painted Bunting, bringing the provincial total to 449. No new breeding species were added in 1991. No changes were made to the Review

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List for Northern or Southern Ontario this year, apart from the addition of recognizable forms, discussed below.

Members of the OBRC in 1991 were R. Douglas McRae (Chairman), Margaret J.C. Bain (non-voting Secretary), Nicholas G. Escott, Richard W. Knapton, Kevin A. McLaughlin, Ronald J. Pittaway, Michael W.P. Runtz, Dennis F. Rupert and George E. Wallace. (Richard Knapton took over partway through the year when George left for Antarctica.)

The Committee held two meetings, instead of the traditional single annual meeting. In November 1991, a meeting was held at Locke House, the FON headquarters in Toronto, to discuss OBRC policy, and in March 1992 a second meeting was held there to review reports still requiring final decisions. Nick Escott deserves the thanks of the Committee for making the journey from Thunder Bay on both occasions.

One of the major policy modifications made at these meetings was the adoption, after much discussion, of the OBRC Review List of Recognizable Forms (1992). For a list of the 22 forms for which the OBRC now invites reports see *Ontario Birds* 10: 39-40. Records prior to January 1992 will not be reviewed, except for a few reports submitted before this announcement. The purpose of this expansion of reporting is to document the occurrence of rare forms in the province, and to stimulate interest in the subspecies and morphs found among the avian population in Ontario. Such close scrutiny of individual birds can only lead to an upgrading of everyone's identification skills; in addition, some

of these forms are so distinctive (e.g. the North American and Eurasian races of Green-winged Teal) that they may have been in the past, or may at some future time be considered separate species. The first example of an acceptable submission of a recognizable form is the record of a "White-rumped" Whimbrel incorporated in this Report. One theoretical danger in encouraging reports of a wide range of forms is the possibility that the Committee may get bogged down in taxonomic wrangles, and have less time to consider more significant rarities. This seems unlikely, but only time will tell; also, if this did occur it would not be difficult to make readjustments.

The major problem the Committee faces continues to be the relatively low percentage of rarities documented and submitted. We are most indebted to Ron Weir for forwarding to the Secretary a distillation from each *American Birds* Seasonal Summary of reportable species and their observers. Even with this as a source, it is estimated that the OBRC receives reports of no more than 60% of potential records from across the province. This compares unfavourably with the 92% claimed by the California Records Committee (Don Roberson 1991, pers. comm.), which does admit however that it took many years to build up a climate of confidence among the birders of that state. The two main factors contributing to the low compliance in Ontario would seem to be, firstly, a degree of regional rivalry, with the OBRC perceived as a Toronto/Hamilton-based body, and secondly a



Figure 1: Ontario Bird Records Committee at Locke House, 21 March 1992. Left to right: Dennis Rupert, Doug McRae, Richard Knapton, Margaret Bain, Kevin McLaughlin, Nick Escott and Ron Pittaway (Mike Runtz absent). Photo by Bob Curry.

reluctance on the part of many birders to run the risk of a report rejection. The first criticism is being addressed by recruiting Committee members from various regions of the province. Members now come from Sarnia, Thunder Bay, Arnprior and Algonquin Park as well as the Golden Horseshoe. The second can only be helped by persuasion and education. If a report is rejected it must be realized that it is the content of the report that is considered insufficient to substantiate the sighting and that no one is calling the observer a liar!

Many thanks to the observers who have sent in their excellent descriptions, often accompanied by field sketches and photographs - even very diagrammatic sketches, with labelling of salient features, can be

invaluable when the report is considered later. All reports, whether accepted or not, are deposited (with the Committee votes and remarks attached) in the Royal Ontario Museum and can be viewed on request. A new non-voting position on the OBRC, that of ROM Liaison, will be instituted shortly; Ross James has agreed to take on this role.

The format of this report follows that used in the Report for 1990 (Curry 1991). For each record, information on age, sex and plumage is included if it can be reliably ascertained. Place names in *italics* refer to counties, regional municipalities or districts in Ontario. All contributors who have provided written descriptions or photographs, videotapes or any other form of

documentation have been credited. Contributors who discovered a bird and also submitted documentation have their names underlined, and finders of birds, where known, are also acknowledged even if they have not contributed a report. After each species name, you will find a summary number in three parts. This follows the system used in *British Birds* (Rogers 1988): the first number refers to the total number of accepted records in Ontario before the first OBRC Report in 1981, the second to the total since 1981 excluding records for the current year, and the third is the number of records for the current year. For many of the "less rare" species this number may well be incomplete - we hear of many more Gyrfalcons and Varied Thrushes than

received reports would suggest were seen.

Every effort is made to verify dates, locations and observers' names, but our data are bound to contain some omissions and inaccuracies. Incontrovertible corrections or updates are welcomed by the Committee. In cases where we are dealing with original reports, and dates or other details differ from those quoted by other sources, for example the *American Birds* Seasonal Summaries, we have used the information which seems most accurate from our own documentation. We hope these explanations will encourage many more reports to the OBRC in the coming years.

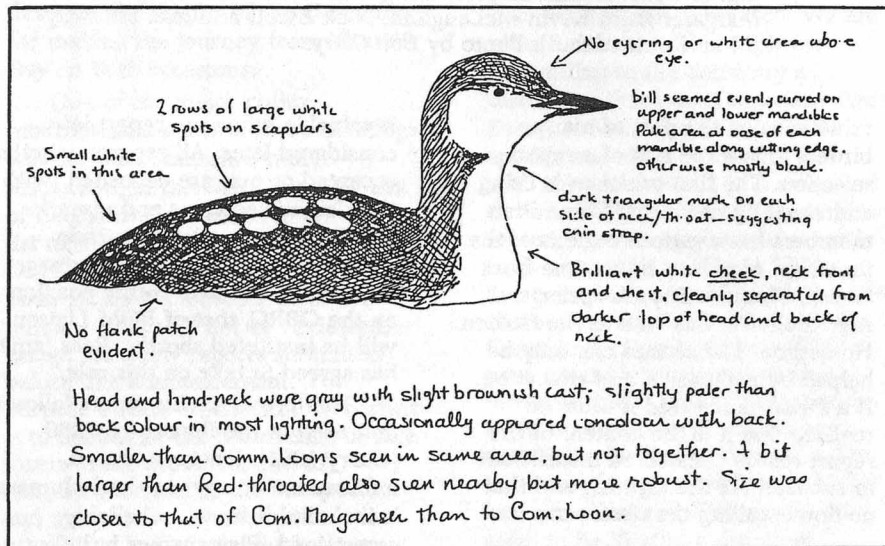


Figure 2: Pacific Loon on Lake Huron at Highland Glen C.A., Lambton, 5 November 1991. Drawing by *Dennis Rupert*.

Accepted Records

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) South Only(3/7/2)

1991 — one adult, 22, 26, 27 August, Tiny Marsh, Simcoe (*Dave Hawke*) - photos on file.

— one adult, 5 November, Highland Glen C.A., Lambton (*Dennis Rupert*).

Since this species breeds in northern Ontario, it is assumed that these southern records are of Pacific rather than Arctic Loon (*G. arctica*). Godfrey (1986) lists two British Columbia specimens as the only records of Arctic Loon for Canada. However, these specimens have been re-examined recently and both were found to be Pacific Loons (Campbell *et al.* 1990).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) (0/4/1)

1991 - two (pair), 23, 24 June, Lake of the Woods P.P., Kenora (*Scott Connop*) - photos on file.

For the third consecutive year this species has been reported from this westerly corner of the province, making a nesting record for Ontario increasingly likely soon. The observer also raised the possibility that the two sightings, on consecutive days but 15 km apart, may have been of two different pairs, although here they are treated as the same birds on both days.

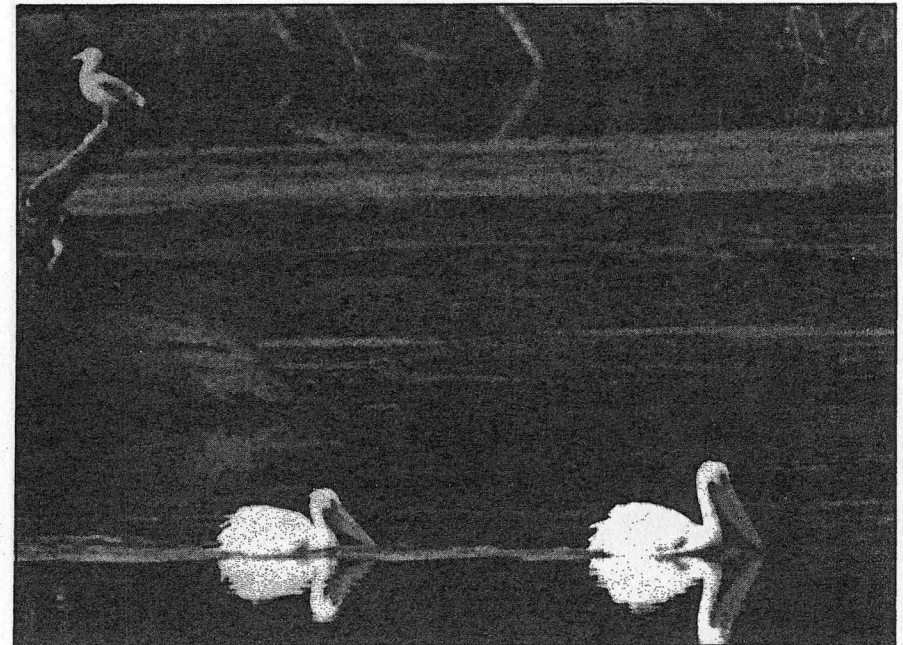


Figure 3: The two long-staying American White Pelicans at Jordan Harbour, Niagara from 17 November 1991 - 13 January 1992. Photo by *Bob Tymczyszyn*.

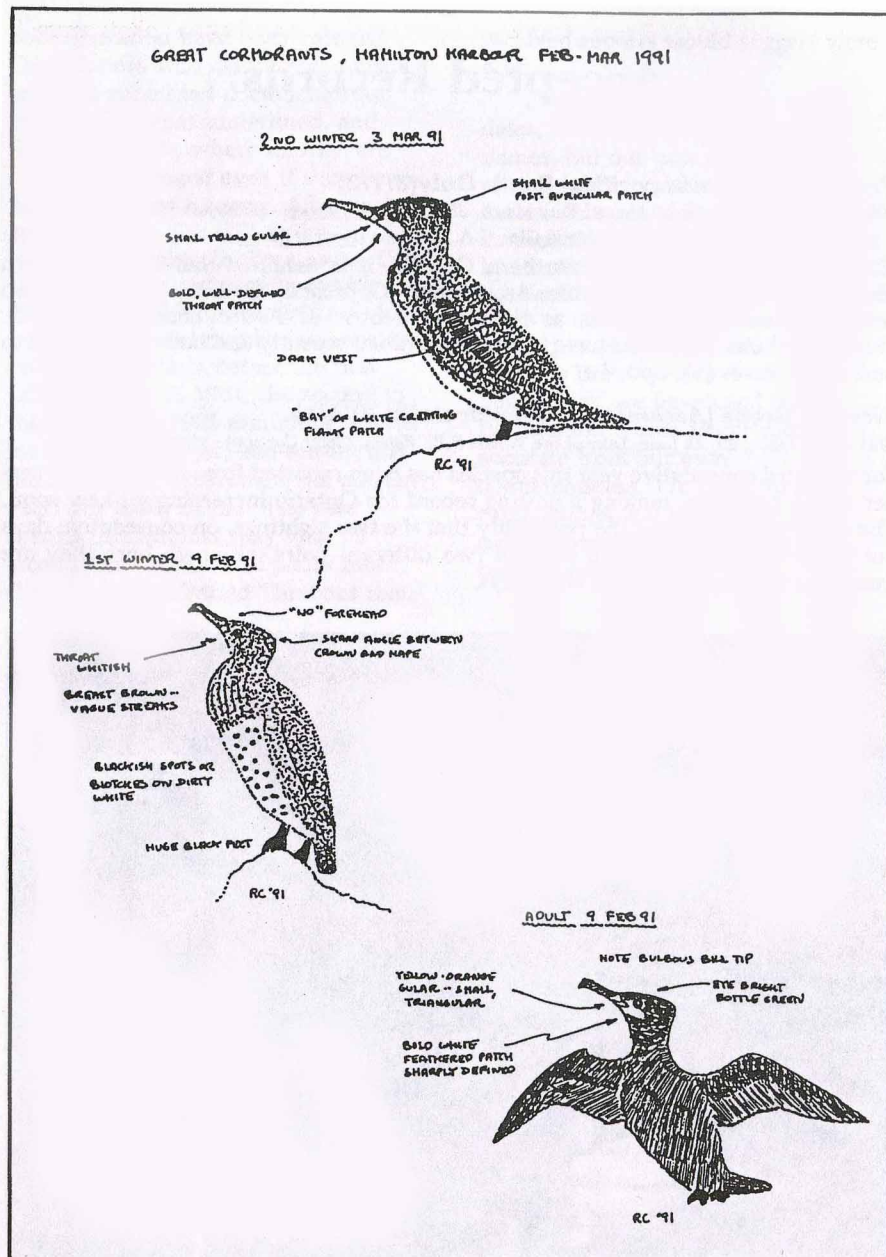


Figure 4: Three Great Cormorants present at Hamilton Harbour from 9 February 1991 to at least the end of April. Drawings by Bob Curry.

Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*) (2/9/1)

1991 — one juvenile, 10 November - 1 December, Niagara-on-the-Lake, *Niagara* to west Hamilton Bay, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (John G. Keenleyside, Kevin McLaughlin, George Naylor).

As in previous years, multiple sightings of single, distinctive rarities like this young gannet have been treated as pertaining to the same individual bird.

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) (2/20/2)

1991 — two (pair), 10, 12 June, Lake Huron, Oliphant, Bruce (Larry W. Elliott) - photos on file.

— two (pair), 29 September - 8 November, Mountsberg C.A., 17 November - 13 January 1992, Jordan Estuary, *Niagara* (Rob Dobos, Mary Ellen Hebb, Bob Tymczyszyn) - photo on file.

There is a sad ending to the tale of the two wintering pelicans - one was found frozen in the ice in Jordan Harbour after a cold spell in January, and it must be assumed that the other also perished.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) (1/3/1)

1991 — one adult, 9 February - 29 April, plus one first year and one second year, 9 February - 8 May, Windermere Basin, Hamilton Bay, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Bob Curry, Don Shanahan).

An unprecedented number of Great Cormorants for the Great Lakes.

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) (*1*/5)

1991 — one adult, 22-26 April, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Ron Ridout, Wilf Yusek; found by Kathleen McNamara and Ralph Speak) - photos on file.

— one adult, 30 April, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Mark J. Palmer).

— one adult, 21, 22 May, Kettle Point, *Lambton* (Rob Tymstra) - photo on file.

— one adult, 25 May, Lake Travers, Algonquin Park, *Nipissing* (Mike Runtz, Ron Tozer).

— one, 27 May, Oshawa Second Marsh, *Durham* (Tyler Hoar) - photos on file.

A good year for this species. This was only the second record for Algonquin Park. The two reports from Long Point were thought to be of different birds.



Figure 5: Adult Snowy Egret at Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* from 22-26 April 1991. Photo by Wilf Yusek.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) North Only (4/6/1)

1991 — one, 1 November, Hurkett, *Thunder Bay* (Wendi Brown) - photos on file. Specimen in the Royal Ontario Museum.

This bird had wandered even farther north than most of the Cattle Egrets seen in such record numbers in Ontario in the fall of 1991. It was brought in to the Ministry of Natural Resources in Nipigon in an emaciated condition, and did not survive. The specimen has been sent to the Royal Ontario Museum.

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) North Only (0/1/1)

1991 — one adult, 18-20 May, Hazelwood Lake, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott; found by Kathleen Kivi) - photos on file.

There are very few records for this species from northern Ontario; most, like this bird, are probably spring overshoots.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) (5/15/1)

1991 — one juvenile, 8-24 September, Silver Lake, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Christopher J. Escott, Doug McRae, Michael Richardson) - photos on file.

Fall reports of this species are less frequent than spring sightings; this is the first fall record since 1987.

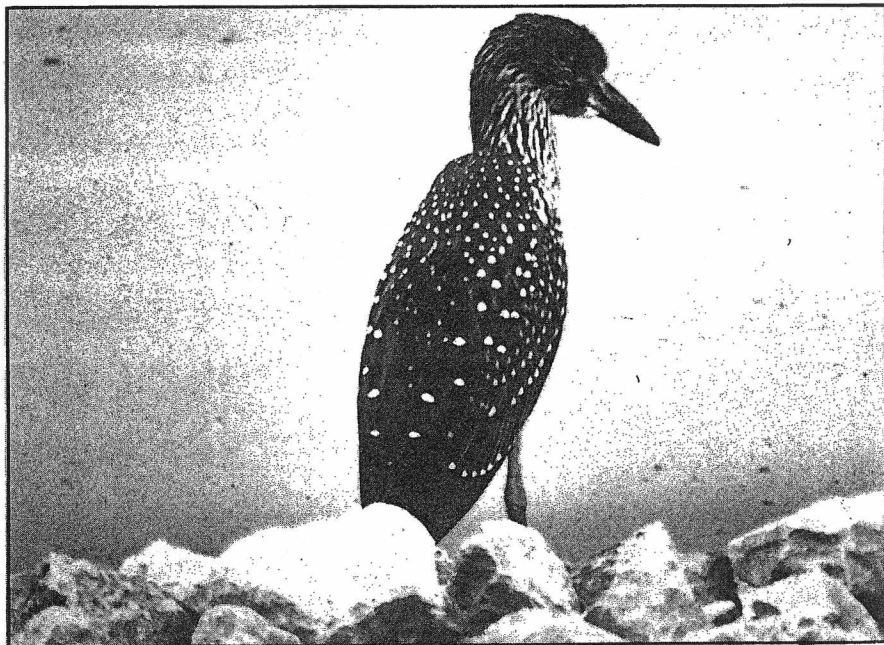


Figure 6: Juvenile Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Silver Lake, *Haldimand-Norfolk* from 8-24 September 1991. Photo by Doug McRae.

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) (0/0/1)

1991 — one second year, 12-14 October and 29-30 October, Turkey Point Marsh, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Jim Coey, Michael Richardson; found by John Lamey).

This was Ontario's fourth record (Lamey 1991), and gratified many observers.

Ibis (*Plegadis* sp.) (3/10/1)

1991 — one, 28 October, Kincardine Sewage Lagoons, *Bruce* (Al McTavish).

1990 — one, 21 September, Shallow Lake, *Grey* (Ernie Johns).

With the first Ontario record of White-faced Ibis (*P. chihi*) overdue (Sabo, 1992), observers are urged to document carefully all the field-marks of any dark ibis. Many reports of Glossy Ibis (*P. falcinellus*) cannot be assigned specific status, and will be recorded as above.

Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) (6/2/0)

1990 — one, 3 June, Petrel Point, *Bruce* (Derek and Anita Kirkland).

As with all waterfowl records, the possibility of an escape must be borne in mind. The Committee enquired and was satisfied that none of this species were present in any waterfowl collection on the Bruce Peninsula; also, the date is reasonable for a spring vagrant.

Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*) South Only (2/21/2)

1991 — two, 31 March, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* (Jay Silverberg).

— 12-15 adults and immatures, 22 October, Keppel Twp., *Grey* (Dave Fidler).

1986 — one, 26 April, Presqu'île P.P., *Northumberland* (Deborah Taylor, Bernd Krueger).

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) (3/38/5)

1991 — one adult male, 19-21 March, Brighton Bay, *Northumberland* (Steve LaForest, Don Shanahan; found by Gerry Shemilt).

— one adult male, 30 March - 10 April, Port Royal, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Doug McRae, George Wallace; found by Mark Palmer, Paul Prior, Michael Richardson).

— one adult male, 25-30 April, Chippewa Landfill, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott; found by Wally Zarowski).

— one adult male, 5 May, Moosonee, *Cochrane* (Mark Kubisz).

— one adult male, 13-26 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex* (David Fewster).

The Moosonee bird is only the second record for the Hudson Bay Lowlands in Ontario, the first having been at Ekwan Point, *Kenora* in 1990.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) (2/6/1)

1991 — one adult, 15 February, Port Hope, *Northumberland* (Ted R. McDonald).

This is the third winter record for Black Vulture in Ontario.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (5/6/1)

1991 — one adult, 17-20 May, Point Pelee, *Essex* (Terry Osborne, Graham P. Catley, Lewis Covell, Andy Sims, Moss Taylor, Ken W. Thorpe) - photo on file.

Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*) South Only (4/12/3)

1991 — one immature, dark morph, 24 January, Amherst Island, *Addington* (Don Shanahan).

— one immature, gray morph, 16 November 1991 - 8 January 1992, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* (John J. Barker, Doug Lockrey, Brian Henshaw, Matt Holder).

— one adult, gray morph, 8 December, Ferndale, *Bruce* (Al McTavish).

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) (0/1/1)

1991 — one, 10 June, Big Creek Marsh, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Richard Knapton).

The second accepted Ontario record. This bird was heard only, but the excellent description of the very distinctive call in typical habitat in calm conditions was completely convincing.

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*) (* /20/4)

1991 — one adult male, 24 April, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Ron Ridout).

— one adult, 10 May, Point Pelee, *Essex* (Steve Starling).

— one adult, 21 May, Oliphant, *Bruce* (Dave Fidler).

— one adult, 27 May, Point Clark, *Bruce* (Al McTavish).

1990 — one adult, 26 April, North Oliphant, *Bruce* (Peter Middleton).

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) (2/3/1)

1991 — three, 19 May, Mitchell Sewage Lagoons, *Perth* (Erwin and Annie Meissner) - photos on file.

A very nicely documented report of the sixth Ontario record; this is the largest group seen in the province so far.

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) (7/27/3)

1991 — six adults, 26 April, McGeachy Pond, Eriean, *Kent* (Mac McAlpine).

— one adult male, 15 May, Hamilton Harbour, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Bob Curry).

— one adult, 6 June, Longridge Point, James Bay, *Cochrane* (Jacqueline M. Leader, Doug McRae, Robert Tymstra) - photo on file.

The Longridge bird represents the first record for the Hudson Bay Lowlands in Ontario, and the most northeasterly record of this species.

"White-rumped" Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus* group) (0/0/1)

1991 — one, 23 May, Etobicoke, *Peel* (Bob Yukich).

Two of the four races of Whimbrel, *N. p. phaeopus* and *N. p. alboaxillaris*, both Western Palearctic in range, have an unbarred white back and rump (Marchant *et al.* 1987). This bird is in fact a greater rarity in Ontario than the preceding American Avocets. More thorough documentation of identifiable forms such as these will add considerably to our knowledge of their occurrence in the province.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) (3/15/3)

1991 — one adult, 29 September, Point Edward, *Lambton* (Dennis Rupert).

— four juveniles, 26 October, Van Wagner's Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Rob Z. Dobos).

— one juvenile, 4 November, Point Edward, *Lambton* (Dennis Rupert).

There was an exceptionally strong jaeger flight throughout the Great Lakes in the fall of 1991, with many observations in Michigan and New York State as well as Ontario (*American Birds*, 1992). Most birds were Parasitics (*S. parasiticus*), but there were also remarkably high numbers of Pomarines. As usual, Sarnia and Hamilton were the places to be. A perhaps understandable reluctance to try to get a report "through the Committee" resulted in far fewer submissions to the OBRC than expected from the sightings one heard about!

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) (3/8/1)

1991 — one juvenile, 28 October, Van Wagner's Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Verne Evans, John L. Olmsted).

Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*) (14/52/3)

1991 — one adult, 1 May, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Paul N. Prior) - photos on file.

— one adult, 11 May, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Paul N. Prior).

— one second summer, 18 May, Point Pelee, *Essex* (Kevin McLaughlin, Barry Cherriere) - photo on file.

Common Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) North Only (0/0/1)

1991 — one adult, 31 July, Longridge Point, James Bay, *Cochrane* (Bob Curry, Don Shanahan).

This well-studied bird is the first OBRC record for the Hudson Bay Lowlands in Ontario. There is one previous record for which we have no documentation.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*) (0/6/2)

1991 — one first winter, 11, 14, 15 March, Pittock Lake, *Oxford* (James M. Holdsworth).

— one second summer, 9 and 12 May, Long Point Tip, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Julian R. Hough).

Two more convincing reports this year continue the almost annual occurrence of this species, for which there were no Ontario records prior to 1981.

White-winged Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) (0/0/1)

1991 — one adult, 8-12 May, Port Lambton and Sombra Sewage Lagoons, *Lambton* (Rob Tymstra, Allen Chartier, Michael A. Patten) - photos on file; 15-18 May, Big Creek Marsh, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (John Carley, Bev Collier, Mark Palmer; found by Tim Sabo) - photos on file.

The first Ontario record for this beautiful tern. Originally, the reports from the two locations were circulated separately, but the final consensus was that it was most likely that all the reports pertained to the same individual.



Figure 7: The White-winged Tern at Big Creek Marsh, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, seen by many from 15-18 May 1991. Photo by Mark Palmer.



Figure 8: Burrowing Owl at Arnprior, Renfrew 19-24 April 1991.
Photo by Michael Runtz.

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (0/3/1)

1991 — one, 19-24 April, Arnprior, Renfrew (Michael Runtz; found by Eric Ridgen) - photos on file.

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*) (* / 1 / 1)

1991 — one male, 6 May - 10 June, Long Point, Haldimand-Norfolk (Michael Richardson; found by Mary Gartshore).

Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) (0/0/1)

1991 — one, 30 June - 3 July, Kakabeka Falls, Thunder Bay (David H. Elder, Nicholas G. Escott, Tim Nash; found by Bob Broome) - photos on file.

Not only new to Ontario, but also a new species for Canada, this sensational find rivals even the White-winged Tern and the Black-capped Vireo for bird of the year. The Green Violet-ear is a montane species resident from Mexico south through the highlands of Middle America to eastern Peru and northern Bolivia (AOU 1983). It is considered casual in south Texas, and there are four records from Arkansas and one from North Carolina. The possibility of an escape was examined carefully, but there were no factors making this at all likely.

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) (8/35/2)

1991 — one, 13 May, Long Point, Haldimand-Norfolk (Julian R. Hough).

— one, 21 May, Point Pelee, Essex (Frank Baugh, Jon Dunn, Kevin McLaughlin; found by Sue Utterback) - photos on file.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*) (3/16/3)

1991 — one adult, 1 June, Long Point, Haldimand-Norfolk (Paul Derbyshire).

— one, 3-13 October, Kincardine, Bruce (Alan McTavish, Kayo Roy) - photo on file.

— one immature, 9, 10 October, Thunder Cape, Thunder Bay (Nicholas G. Escott; found by Alan Wormington) - photos on file.

— one immature male, 9 October, Thunder Cape, Thunder Bay (Nicholas G. Escott; found by David Shepherd) - photos on file.

The two birds seen together at the Thunder Cape Observatory, and so well photographed, were a most unusual record.



Figure 9: The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher banded at Thunder Cape, Thunder Bay on 9 October 1991. Photo by Nick Escott.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) (2/8/2)

1991 — one adult male, 7 April, Atikokan, Rainy River (Don Graham, Dave Elder) - photos on file.

— one immature male, 26, 27 September, Rainy River, Rainy River (Kevin McLaughlin, Barbara Charlton, Rob Dobos).

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) (4/12/1)

1991 — one, 28 September, Sleeping Giant P.P., Thunder Bay (Rob Dobos, Kevin McLaughlin).

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) (5/38/1)

1991/92 — one adult male, 6 December - 10 April (not seen for about ten days in January), Boston Mills, Peel (Terry Osborne; found by Brian and Gloria Durrell).

Black-capped Vireo (*Vireo atricapillus*) (0/0/1)

1991 — one female, 27 April, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Julian R. Hough) - photo on file.

Another amazing record, and another new species for Ontario and Canada. The Black-capped Vireo is a short distance migrant and considered endangered in its restricted North American breeding range in Oklahoma and southwest Texas, so to find one in a mistnet at Long Point was incredible. For a full description and discussion of the occurrence see Hough (1991).

Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*) (17/39/4)

1991 — one, *albiflora*, 14 April, Port Stanley, *Elgin* (Anne and Marvin Smout).

— one adult, *albiflora*, 14 May, Old Cut, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Julian R. Hough) - photo on file.

— one adult, 18 May, Wheatley P.P., *Kent* (Thomas Hurst; found by John Lisek).

— one adult, 27 September, Scarborough, *Metropolitan Toronto* (Mark Pearson).

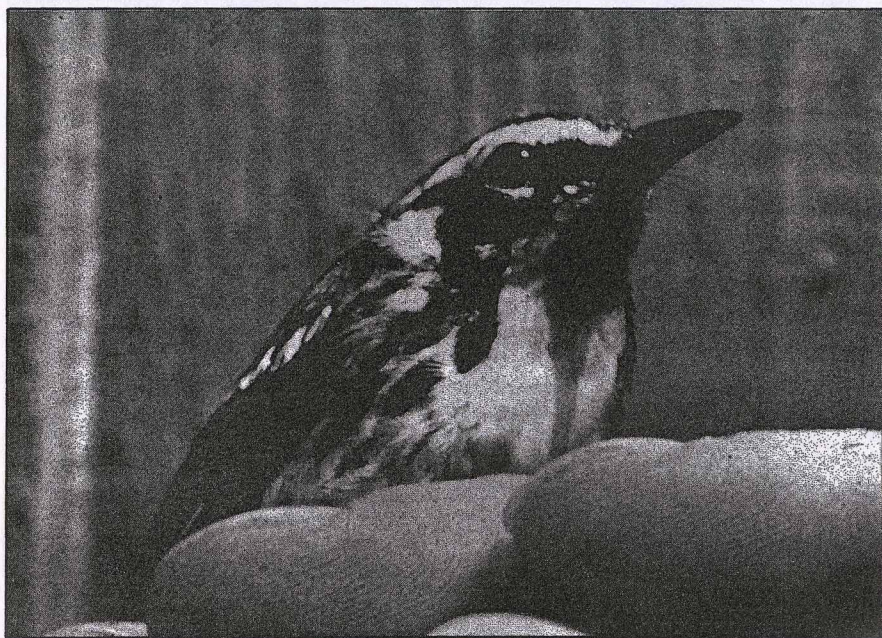


Figure 10: A Yellow-throated Warbler banded at Old Cut, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* on 14 May 1991. Photo by Julian Hough.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) (7/4/1)

1991 — one adult, 22 May, Leslie Street Spit, *Metropolitan Toronto* (Martin McNicholl).

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) (1/0/1)

1991 — one adult male, 25-28 May, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (James M. Holdsworth, Jon McCracken, Ron Ridout; found by Denys Gardiner) - photos on file.

This unusually cooperative singing male was a "lifer" for many enthusiastic birders, and an Ontario bird for most who saw it.



Figure 11: Male Swainson's Warbler banded at Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, seen and heard by many, from 25-28 May 1991. Photo by Ron Ridout.

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) North Only (1/14/2)

1990/91 — one adult male, 22 December - 10 May, Chapleau, *Sudbury* (Con Schmidt) - photo on file.

1991 — one adult male, 19 April, Glackmeyer Twp., *Cochrane* (Dan Paleczny; found by Suzanne and Jake Paleczny).

— two (pair), 11 May, Kirkland Lake, *Timiskaming* (Lloyd Taman; found by Vic Nielson).

A series of milder winters may be helping the Northern Cardinal consolidate its northerly range expansion. There have been at least four birds reported from various locations in the north of Ontario each year for the last three years.

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*) (7/14/3)

1991 — one male, 8 May, Wyevalle, *Simcoe* (Bill Zufelt; found by Peter Hough) - photo on file.

— one female, 12 May, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Michael Richardson) - photo on file.

— one first spring male, 19, 20 May, Kopegaron Woods, Wheatley, *Essex* (Graham P. Catley, John and Victoria Carley, Diane Haselmayer) - photos on file.

An interesting and very well-documented selection of differing individuals of this sometimes misidentified species.



Figure 12: Female Blue Grosbeak banded at Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* on 12 May 1991. Photo by *Michael Richardson*.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) (0/0/1)

1991 — one, 4 June, Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (*Mark J. Palmer*, Paul N. Prior) - photos on file.

This bird was thoroughly examined, measured and photographed after being mist-netted. The excellent photographs leave no doubt as to identity. No evidence of wear due to captivity was found. There are now enough established extralimital records to justify this being considered a true vagrant, and the date would be very suitable for a young non-breeding male, as this bird probably was, to be found out of range. Painted Bunting, therefore, finally makes it to the Ontario List. Several previous Ontario records submitted to the Committee are retained on a Deferred List because of concerns about origin, and these may be reviewed at a future date.

Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) North Only (2/5/1)

1991 — one adult male, 23 November - 3 December, Clute Twp., *Cochrane* (*John E. Thompson*).

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) (4/25/3)

1991 — one, 10 May, Rondeau P.P., *Kent* (*Bennett Hennessey*).

- one, 20 May, Cobalt, *Timiskaming* (*Bruce Murphy*) - photo on file.
- one, 2 September, Neys P.P., *Thunder Bay* (*Ted Armstrong*).

Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) (3/11/0)

1990 — one adult male, 23 June, Greenbank, *Durham* (*Stuart Williams*).



Figure 13: Painted Bunting banded at Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* on 4 June 1991. Photo by *Mark Palmer*.

Harris' Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) South Only (3/12/2)

1991 — one adult, 8-10 May, Greens Corner, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (*Marcie Jacklin*).

- one adult, 11 October, Byng Inlet, *Parry Sound* (*Mark Kubisz*).

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*) (0/0/1)

1991 — one winter male, 29 April, Sleeping Giant P.P., *Thunder Bay* (*Nicholas G. Escott*).

This well-described bird represents only the third record for Ontario.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*) (1/1/2)

1991 — one male, 20 February - 30 March and 11 April, Hamilton Twp., *Northumberland* (*John Geale*, Nancy Barrett, Jim Coey, Geoff Dale, Sid and Dorothy Hadlington, Steve LaForest, Ted R. McDonald, Don Shanahan) - photos on file.

- one adult male, 4-7 October, Atikokan, *Rainy River* (*Dave Elder*, Don Graham; found by Jerry Zajac) - video on file.

These are the third and fourth records for Ontario, the first having been at Brampton, *Peel* in 1980, and the second at Atikokan in 1983. A large number of birders saw the cooperative Brambling at the feeder north of Port Hope, but few visited after the end of March, and the bird may well have lingered further into spring than these dates suggest. Dave Elder's excellent video of the Atikokan bird is only the second example of this form of documentation in OBRC files.

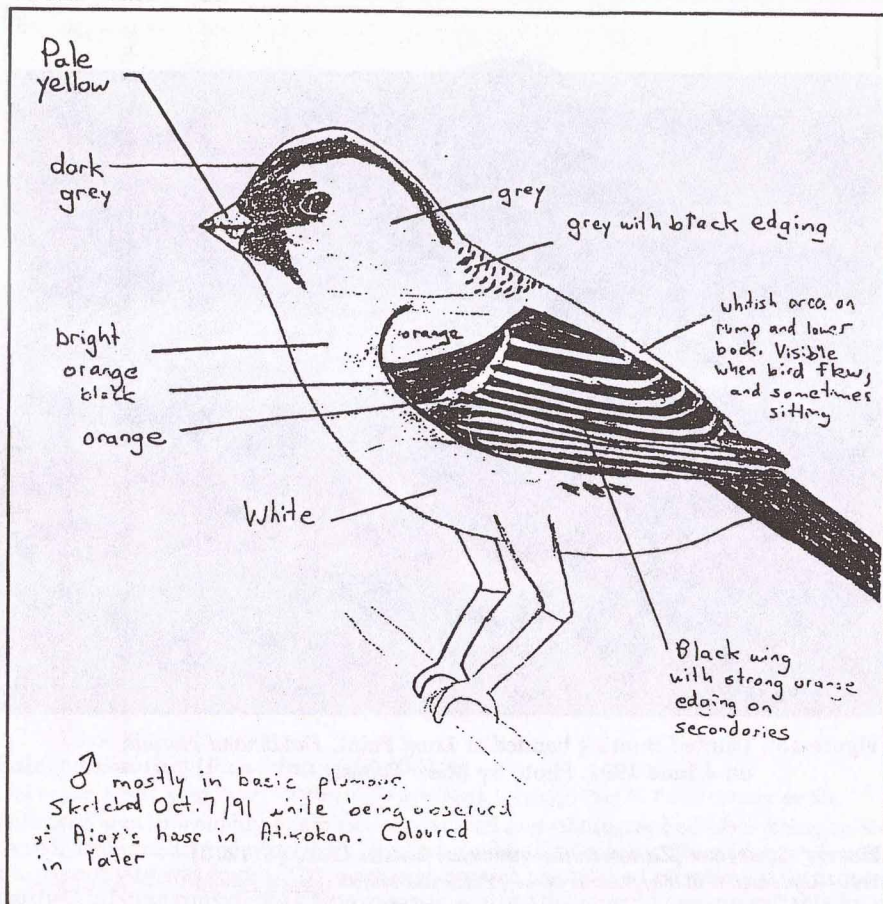


Figure 14: Male Brambling at Atikokan, Rainy River from 4-7 October 1991. Drawing by Don Graham.

Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte arctoa*) (1/1/0)

1975 — one, January/February (exact dates unknown), Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay (Nicholas G. Escott; found by the late Howard Quackenbush) - photos on file.

This bird appeared to be of the gray-crowned *tephrocotis* race. James (1991) quotes six other provincial records; there is one other photographic record of *tephrocotis*, and two of the more extensively gray-headed race *littoralis*.

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) North Only (0/0/1)

1991 — one male, 24-29 April and 2 May, Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay (Gordon A. Allen, Ted Armstrong) - photos on file.

Unaccepted Records

Identification accepted, origin questionable

Records in this category are those considered by the Committee to be almost certainly escaped birds or birds released from captivity. However, as with all submissions to the OBRC, such records may be reviewed again at any time should further information arise suggesting a wild origin.

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica*) South Only

1991 — one, 8 October, Dorchester, Middlesex (Bev Collier).

The Committee's conservative approach to records of this species in southern Ontario continues, and will probably do so until or if there is evidence of a major movement through the province at some time in the future.

Chihuahuan Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*)

1976 — one, 16 May, Long Point, Haldimand-Norfolk (David J.T. Hussell) - photos and nape feather on file.

This record had not previously been reviewed by the OBRC, but was circulated together with another current report of this species. This raven is often kept in captivity in the United States (Godfrey 1986) and the described tameness of the bird in question further suggested a captive origin.

Unaccepted Records

Identification uncertain

In most of the records listed below, the description supplied was found to be insufficient to establish with certainty the identity of the species claimed. In very few cases did the Committee consider that the identification was actually erroneous. Again, any of these reports may be resubmitted for further review if some new supporting evidence comes to light.

1991 — Pacific Loon, one, 18 November, Highland Glen C.A., Lambton

- Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), one, 24 August, Fort William I.R., Thunder Bay.
- Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*), one 11-15 May, Smooth Rock Falls, Cochrane.
- Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*), one, 16 May, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), one, 19 May, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Eurasian Wigeon, four, 21 April, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Gyrfalcon, one, 3 February, Whitby, Durham.
- Piping Plover, one, 10 May, Rondeau P.P., Kent.
- Pomarine Jaeger, one, 5 November, Presqu'île P.P., Northumberland.
- Laughing Gull, one, 27 April, Mission Island Marsh, Thunder Bay.
- Laughing Gull, one, 11 May, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Dovekie (*Alle alle*), one, 12 June, Polar Bear P.P., Cochrane.
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, one, 13 May, Point Pelee, Essex.

- Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), one, 8 May, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*), one, 19 May, Moose Factory, Cochrane.
- Swainson's Warbler, one, 9 May, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Blue Grosbeak, one, 17 May, Point Pelee, Essex.
- Blue Grosbeak, one, 17-21 May, Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay.
- Baird's Sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*), one, 17 May, Point Pelee, Essex.

- 1990 — American White Pelican, one, 15, 16 May, Orangeville Reservoir, Dufferin.
 — Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, one, 22 May, Whitby, Durham.
 — Chihuahuan Raven, one, 19 August, Minaki, Kenora.

- 1986 — Gyrfalcon, one, 24 December, Presqu'île P.P., Northumberland.

- 1985 — Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*), one, 26, 27 July, Long Point, Haldimand-Norfolk.

Corrections/Updates to Previous OBRC Reports

1990 Report (Ontario Birds 8: 4-32)

- under Northern Gannet, the last sentence should read "The Moore Point bird is the first fall adult accepted by the OBRC."
- under American White Pelican (1990 at Whitby) add "found by Ian Richardson".
- "Great White-fronted Goose" should read "Greater White-fronted Goose".
- under Greater White-fronted Goose (1990 at Whitby) add "Brian Henshaw" as co-finder submitting documentation.
- under Mew Gull (1990/91 at Toronto) add "Nancy Barrett" as a contributor, as she supplied the photo on file.
- under Western Kingbird (1981 at Long Point), change Roy C. Smith to Roy B.H. Smith.
- under Bewick's Wren (1981 at Long Point), dates should be 7-15 April 1981.
- under Lark Bunting (1990 at Winona) add "found by Alf Epp".
- under Acknowledgements, change Roy C. Smith to Roy B.H. Smith.

Acknowledgements

The OBRC would like to thank the many observers who took the time to compile and submit reports and photographs in 1991. We are especially grateful to those who provided assistance with obtaining reports that were not their own, or information on dates of occurrence, or gave expert opinions in cases of difficult identification problems; they include Barbara Charlton, Rob Dobos,

Nick Escott, Dave Fidler, Mary Ellen Hebb, Brian Henshaw, Alvaro Jaramillo, Steve LaForest, Jon McCracken, Kevin McLaughlin, John Olmsted, Terry Osborne, Michael Patten, J. Van Remsen, Ron Ridout, Don Roberson, Gary Rosenberg, Dave Shepherd and George Wallace.

Many thanks again to Ron Weir for his helpful abstractions from the *American Birds* Seasonal Summaries.

We wish him well in his new editorial position with the *Journal of Chemical Thermodynamics* and look forward to working with his successor, Ron Ridout of Long Point Bird Observatory. Bob Curry most kindly took on the task of preparing the summary numbers accompanying each record, and supplied much advice and encouragement as a previous author of this Report. Doug McRae was a charming Chairman to work for. Thanks to all the 1991 Committee for their comments on reviewing the first draft of this Report. Last but not least, we once again thank Bob Finlayson for making printer-ready the slides and colour prints accompanying the reports.

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