

# Articles

## Ontario Bird Records Committee Report for 1997

Robert Z. Dobos

### Introduction

This is the 16th annual report of the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC). The members of the Committee in 1997 were Margaret Bain, David Brewer, Peter Burke, Robert Dobos (non-voting Secretary), Nick Escott, Richard Knapton, Donald Sutherland and Ron Tozer (Chairperson). Ross James served as Museum Liaison (non-voting) to the OBRC.

The number of reports received and reviewed by the Committee was substantially higher in 1997 than the previous year. Of the 182 records reviewed, 85 percent were accepted, which is within the range of past years. The Ontario bird checklist continues to increase steadily, with the acceptance and addition of three new species: Greater Shearwater (south), Plumbeous Vireo (south) and Baird's Sparrow (north). The official Ontario list now stands at 470 species. Interest in recognizable forms is also on the rise amongst Ontario birders, as a number of reports in this category were reviewed, resulting in the acceptance of two new subspecies groups

for Ontario, "Palearctic" Dunlin and "Gray-headed" Junco. No new breeding species for the province were accepted in 1997.

OBRC records are archived at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). Researchers and other interested persons may examine filed reports and Committee decisions at the ROM by appointment. Please contact Brad Millen, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Biology, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6, or call 416-586-5519.

### Listing of Records

The format of this report follows that used in last year's annual report (Dobos 1997). Accepted records are listed by their English and scientific names following the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Check-list (1983) and its supplements to date. Following the names, a binomial numbering system appears. The first number indicates the total number of accepted records (by the OBRC) prior to 1 January 1982 (the formation of the OBRC); the second is the total number of accepted records from



1982 to 1997 (including those listed in this report). An asterisk in place of the first number indicates that documentation was not required for the occurrence of these species prior to 1982. Date(s) of occurrence, number of birds, sex, plumage, and location(s) are provided when known. Counties, Districts and Regional Municipalities are shown in italics. The plumage terminology used here follows the Humphrey and Parkes (1959) system (see Pittaway 1995a). All contributors of documentation are listed. Contributors who were known to be the finders of the bird are underlined. Finders who did not submit a report are also listed, when known.

Every effort has been made to verify information published regarding a record; however, it is possible that some inaccuracies may still exist. We would welcome any corrections or updates to any such records. Where dates or other details listed here differ from those quoted in other published sources (for example, *Birders Journal* or *Field Notes*) we have used the most accurate available information.

All records that were not accepted because of uncertain identification or origin are listed separately. Contributors of all "not accepted" reports receive a letter from the Chairperson explaining the reasons for the decision, along with copies of the comments of the voting members. These reports are

also kept on permanent file at the ROM. A "not accepted" record can be reconsidered by the OBRC if new evidence is submitted to the Committee for review.

### Deferred Records

The OBRC has formerly used the "Deferred" category for records where the identification was accepted but wild status was uncertain. This year, the Committee has deferred several records on a different basis, namely where identification criteria are not fully understood. These are explained below.

The OBRC has decided to defer any further decisions on reports of Bullock's Orioles for Ontario. Following the AOU decision to re-split Northern Oriole into Bullock's and Baltimore Orioles (AOU 1995), there has been considerable discussion and some disagreement recently amongst experts across North America regarding identification criteria for separating females and first basic plumaged birds of these two species. Much of this discussion occurred over the Internet on the National Birding Hotline Cooperative's "ID Frontiers Chat Line" following the description and posting of photographs of possible female type Bullock's Orioles in the northeastern United States during late fall. It is expected that detailed identification information for separating these species will be published in the near future (Lee and Birch 1998;

Jaramillo and Burke, *in press*).

During 1997, an historical report of Bullock's Oriole was under review by the Committee, and reports of two recent sightings in 1997 were also received. These, and any subsequently received reports, are deferred for the time being. The previously accepted Bullock's Oriole records for Ontario (see Dobos 1997) may also need to be reconsidered.

A report of a "tuftless" Tufted Duck was also under review, with the decision to defer the record pending availability of more information on hybrid *Aythya* ducks. Once again, the ID Frontiers Internet site provided a useful forum for discussion of identification pitfalls involving possible hybrid Tufted Ducks and other *Aythya* spp., and a publication on this topic is expected in the near future. This record will be reconsidered at that time.

### AOU Checklist

In 1997, the AOU published its forty-first supplement to the North American bird checklist (AOU 1997), which resulted in many changes to the Ontario checklist, mostly related to sequences of families, genera and species, as well as a number of taxonomic revisions at the species level and changes to scientific names. This report incorporates those changes to the best of our knowledge. It is expected that a totally revised AOU checklist will

be published in 1998 which will update all of the changes since the last publication in 1983. At that point, the OBRC will republish the Ontario checklist in *Ontario Birds* in order to reflect the most current taxonomy, nomenclature and sequencing. Only the major revisions (taxonomic splits, nomenclature) from the forty-first supplement affecting the Ontario checklist are described here.

Marbled Murrelet has been split into Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) and Long-billed Murrelet (*B. perdix*). The single Ontario record pertains to *B. perdix* (Bain 1994); as a result, Marbled Murrelet is changed to Long-billed Murrelet on the Ontario list.

Solitary Vireo has been split into Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*), Cassin's Vireo (*V. cassinii*) and Plumbeous Vireo (*V. plumbeus*). The commonly occurring form in Ontario is the Blue-headed Vireo, which replaces Solitary on the Ontario checklist. As mentioned above, a recently accepted record listed in this report adds Plumbeous Vireo to the Ontario checklist.

Scientific name changes are as follows: Spruce Grouse becomes *Falcipennis canadensis*; American Golden-Plover reverts to *Pluvialis dominica*; Burrowing Owl becomes *Athene cunicularia*; Olive-sided Flycatcher becomes *Contopus cooperi*; Cliff Swallow becomes



*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*; Cave Swallow becomes *Petrochelidon fulva*; Black-capped Chickadee becomes *Poecile atricapillus*; Carolina Chickadee becomes *Poecile carolinensis*; Boreal Chickadee becomes *Poecile hudsonicus*; Tufted Titmouse becomes *Baeolophus bicolor*.

### Changes to the Review List

At the OBRC policy meeting in October 1997, a number of changes to the Review List for both southern and northern Ontario were discussed and passed, all of which involved removals from the list. The criterion used for delisting was 25 or more published records in southern Ontario during a five year period. For northern Ontario (which requires a different criterion due to scarcity of observers), changes were made on a more *ad hoc* basis. The changes to the Review List are as follows: Snowy Egret - remove for south; Greater White-fronted Goose - remove for south; Trumpeter Swan - remove for south; Western Kingbird - remove for both south and north; Varied Thrush - remove for north; Northern Cardinal - remove for north; and Harris's Sparrow - remove for south. All of these changes came into effect starting 1 January 1998.

Consideration was also given to a number of recognizable forms included on the Review List. It was decided to remove "Lawrence's"

Warbler from the list, primarily since it is a hybrid form. It was also decided to remove "Appalachian" Black-throated Blue Warbler from the list, based on expert opinion received from Jon L. Dunn (pers. comm.) that this form is in fact very difficult or impossible to determine with certainty in the field, without a specimen in hand. There are no verified records from Ontario, and inclusion on the Review List was felt to be misleading.

### Acknowledgements

The OBRC would like to thank the many observers who submitted reports, photographs, sketches, videos and specimens of rare birds during 1997. We are grateful to a number of people, some outside Ontario, who provided their expert opinion on several records, including the following: Tony Leukering of Colorado and James Rising of Toronto for comments on "White-winged" Junco; Alvaro Jaramillo of California for comments on Bullock's Oriole; Jon L. Dunn of Ohio and Jon McCracken of Port Rowan for comments on "Traill's" Flycatcher; and Steve Russell of Arizona for comments on *Selasphorus* hummingbird. The following people are also thanked either for obtaining and forwarding reports from others, or assisting the Committee in other ways: Robert Andrie, Margaret Bain, Peter Chapman, Barbara Charlton, Allen Chartier, Glenn Coady, Bob Curry,

Willie D'Anna, Bruce Di Labio, Dan Dufour, Nick Escott, Shawn Giilck, Jean Iron, Barry Kent MacKay, John Lemon, Sheldon McGregor, Kevin McLaughlin, Erwin Meissner, John Miles, Martin Parker, Ron Pittaway, Paul Pratt, Paul Prior, Ron Ridout, Kayo Roy, Doug Sadler, Roger Simms, Roy

Smith, Marvin Smout, Mike Street, Ron Tozer, and Alan Wormington.

I would also like to thank the other 1997 OBRC members for their assistance and cooperation throughout the past year, and for their helpful comments on previous drafts of this report.

### Accepted Records

#### Yellow-billed Loon *Gavia adamsii* (2/1)

1997 - one, juvenal, 2-7 January, Point Abino, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, Alan Wormington, William C. D'Anna, Gordon Bellerby, Kayo J. Roy, Glenn Coady, Dominic F. Sherony, Peter S. Burke, found by John Lamey) - photos on file.

This cooperative bird provided the third accepted record for Ontario, the previous records involving birds at Grimsby, *Niagara*, on 4 May 1967 (James 1983), and at Shirley's Bay, *Ottawa-Carleton*, on 19 May 1980 (Wormington and Curry 1990).

#### Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis* (0/10)

1996 - one, basic, 7-8 October, Heron Bay, *Thunder Bay*, (Keith D. Wade) - photo on file.

#### Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* (3/6)

1997 - one, definitive basic, light morph, male, *F.g. glacialis* (found dead, fresh), 11 December, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, (John L. Olmsted, Robert Z. Dobos) - photos on file, specimen (skin) in ROM.

This bird was found dead washed up on the beach at the western end of Lake Ontario on the day following a strong easterly gale. It was determined to be of the nominate subspecies *glacialis*, which breeds in eastern Greenland and frequently wanders off the coasts of Labrador, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia (Godfrey 1986), an indication that this bird likely arrived on the Great Lakes via the St. Lawrence River.

#### Black-capped Petrel *Pterodroma hasitata* (3/21)

1996 - one, 8 September, Port Colborne, *Niagara* (Alan Wormington).  
 - three, 8 September, Fort Erie, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John Lamey, also found by John L. Olmsted).  
 - one, 12 September, Fort Erie, *Niagara* (William C. D'Anna).  
 - one, definitive basic, male (found dead, partly decomposed), 12 September, Windmill Point, *Niagara* (John L. Olmsted, Robert Stamp) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159637).



- one, definitive basic, female (found dead, fresh), 13 September, Long Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Paul N. Prior, found by David C. Bostock, Chris J. Dunn) - specimen (skin) in Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO), photo on file.
- one, definitive basic, female (found dead, partly decomposed), 14 September, Crescent Beach, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159639).
- one, 14 September, Fort Erie, *Niagara* (William C. D'Anna).
- one, 15 September, Fort Erie, *Niagara* (William C. D'Anna).
- one, 15 September, Thunder Bay, *Niagara* (Robert Curry).
- one, definitive basic, female (found dead, partly decomposed), 15 September, Thunder Bay, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, Barry D. Jones, John L. Olmsted) - specimen in ROM (#159638).
- one (found dead), 15 September, Pleasant Beach, *Niagara* (Bruce M. Di Labio, found by Stephen T. Pike) - specimen in Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN), photos on file.
- one, 16 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).
- one, 16 September, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (William Wilson).
- one, 17 September, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos, also found by Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted).
- one, definitive basic, male (found dead, fresh), 18 September, Confederation Park, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (John L. Olmsted, Wilfred Yusek, Robert Curry) - specimen (skin) in ROM (#159640), photo on file.
- one (found dead, badly decomposed), 21 September, Pleasant Beach, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted, Wilfred Yusek) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159644).
- one (found dead, badly decomposed), 21 September, Pleasant Beach, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted, Wilfred Yusek) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159645).
- one (found dead, badly decomposed), 21 September, Empire Beach, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted, Wilfred Yusek) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159647).
- one (found dead, badly decomposed), 21 September, Lorraine, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted, Wilfred Yusek) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159643).
- one (found dead), 28 September, Waverly Beach, *Niagara* (Robert Curry, John L. Olmsted) - specimen (skeleton) in ROM (#159641).
- one (found dead, badly decomposed), 30 September, Confederation Park, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos, found by Dennis Lewington, Gwen Lewington) - specimen in ROM, photos on file.
- 1955 - one (found dead, emaciated), 21 August, Morgan's Point, *Niagara* (Alice Ulrich) - specimen (fluid preserved) in ROM (#76892).
- 1893 - one, male (found dead), 30 October, Toronto Island, *Toronto* (George Pierce) - specimen (skin) in ROM (#34256).
- one (found dead), 1893 (date unknown), Oakville, *Halton* (H.J. Baker) - specimen (skin, skeleton) in ROM (#34255).

The 1996 birds were displaced from the Atlantic Ocean by Hurricane Fran, which passed through the lower Great Lakes area on 7-8 September (Curry 1996). The passage of this hurricane resulted in what can be considered as one of the most remarkable ornithological events ever recorded in Ontario. For personal accounts of the original sightings of the petrels, see Curry and Olmsted (1996) and Lamey (1996). Curry (1996) summarized in detail all of the known sightings and dead birds found on the Great Lakes, including Black-capped Petrels and other species which were likely the result of

Hurricane Fran (see Wormington [1997a] for corrections to this article). Not all of the occurrences listed there have been dealt with by the OBRC to date, and readers are encouraged to submit additional documentation for any sightings that are not included above in order to provide a more complete record of this event. All sightings from different locations on separate days, and each specimen found, are considered here to pertain to separate records, although in reality some of the sightings may have involved the same individuals as well as some of the birds found dead. However, any duplication would be offset by the certainty that not all of the birds which reached Lakes Erie and Ontario (and the certainty that all of these birds eventually perished) would have been subsequently found. It is impossible to know for certain how many petrels were actually in Ontario following Fran, but the 21 records listed above could be considered to be a minimum at best. For a more complete picture of the effects of the 1996 hurricane season on birds along the entire eastern seaboard, see Brinkley *et al.* (1997).

The OBRC also reviewed the three previous historical records of Black-capped Petrel for Ontario, all involving specimens in the collection at the ROM. The 1955 record followed the passage of Hurricane Connie (Beardslee and Mitchell 1965). Accounts of the two specimens from 1893 appear in Brown (1894) and Fleming (1906).

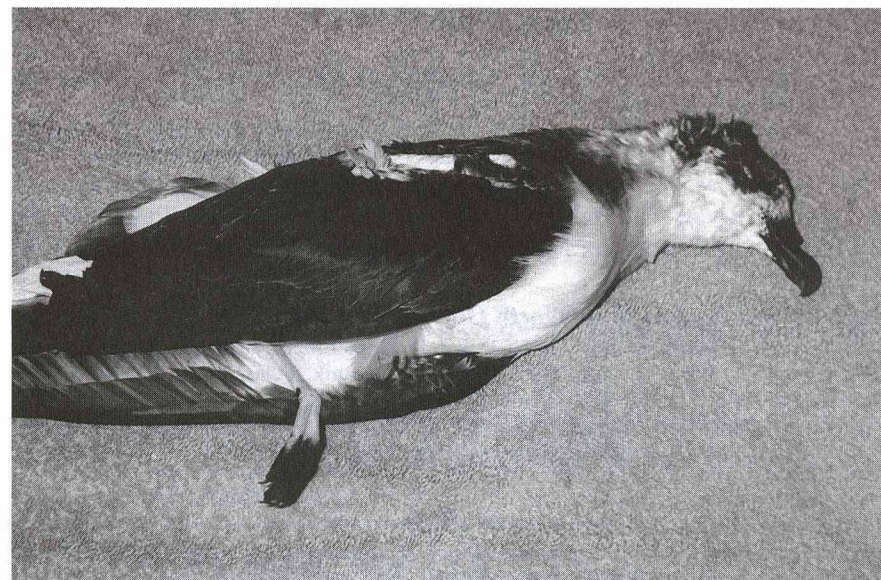


Figure 1: Black-capped Petrel found dead at Confederation Park, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, on 18 September 1996. Photo by Robert Curry.



**Greater Shearwater *Puffinus gravis* (0/1)**

- 1997 – one, male (found in weakened condition, died later in captivity), 20 August, Toronto, *Toronto* (Paloma Plante, Wendy Hunter, collector unknown) - specimen (skin) in ROM (#159988).

This is the first record for Ontario. The bird was found in a weakened condition by a person who was walking along the Toronto waterfront. It was taken to the Toronto Humane Society for rehabilitation, but unfortunately did not survive (MacKay 1997). A detailed account of this occurrence will appear in a future issue of *Ontario Birds* (Brewer *et al.*, *in prep.*).

**Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (0/1)**

- 1996 – three, 10 September, Waverly Beach, *Niagara* (William G. Lindley, also found by Glenn Coady, Alan W. McTavish).

These birds were also the result of Hurricane Fran. Additional observations of this species and unidentified storm-petrels at Fort Erie are listed by Curry (1996), but documentation has not been submitted to the OBRC to date. These were the only inland occurrences of storm-petrels away from Fran's land-fall area in North Carolina and Virginia (Brinkley *et al.* 1997). There are two historical records for Ontario involving specimens: spring of 1897 at *Muskoka*, and 14 August 1955 at *Niagara* (James 1991). These records have not yet been considered by the OBRC.

**Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* (2/18)**

- 1996 – one, juvenal, 10 November, Ottawa, *Ottawa-Carleton* (Michael Tate, also found by Bernie Ladouceur, Bev Scott, Gordon McLean, Maxine McLean, Colin Bowen, Pat Bowen, Tom Hanrahan).  
 – one, juvenal, 22 December, Burlington, *Halton*, and Toronto, *Toronto* (John L. Olmsted, Jerry DeMarco, Hendrik Hart, also found by Robert Stamp, Richard G. Snider).

The Ottawa bird was observed from both the Ontario and Quebec sides of the Ottawa River. The sightings on 22 December were four hours apart at Burlington and Toronto and are considered here to pertain to the same bird.

**Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* North Only, Except from 1991-1997 (1/26)**

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, 14 August, Pickering (Corner Marsh), *Durham* (Tom Cosburn).  
 1996 – one, 30 May - 5 June, Blenheim, *Kent* (Keith J. Burk, found by Ross Harris) - photos on file.

Sightings in southern Ontario after 31 December 1997 (or before 1 January 1991) no longer require documentation by the OBRC.

**Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* (7/28)**

- 1996 – one, 21 April, Peche Island Provincial Park, *Essex* (Kendall J. McKinney).  
 – one, definitive alternate, 3 May, Comber, *Essex* (Alan Cairns, also found by Jennifer Beale).  
 1991 – one, definitive alternate, 2-3 May, Mar, *Bruce* (Peter D. Middleton).

**Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* (2/19)**

- 1996 – one, definitive alternate, 17-18 May, St. Clair National Wildlife Area, *Kent* (Carl J. Maiolani, Keith J. Burk, also found by Chris Maiolani).

**Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* North Only (4/10)**

- 1996 – one, first basic, 21 October, Moosonee, *Cochrane* (Daniel Byers, found by Sally Hester).  
 – three, first basic, 26 October, Fort Frances, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms, found by Jim Keddie).

These records fall neatly within the narrow range for all northern Ontario records of 20 October - 8 November.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* (5/24)**

- 1996 – one, alternate, 25 May, Toronto (Leslie Street Spit), *Toronto* (Larry A. Morse).

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (2/26)**

- 1997 – one, definitive alternate, 17-23 May, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex* (Ronald J. Pittaway, Kevin A. McLaughlin, also found by Jean Iron).  
 – one, 15 June, Douro and Buckley's Lake, *Peterborough* (Peter S. Burke).  
 1993 – one, definitive basic, 8-12 October, Burgoyne, *Bruce* (Dean G. Newton, Shawn Giilck, found by Jim Westenberg) - photo on file.

**Ibis species *Plegadis* sp. (3/26)**

- 1997 – one, 16 May, Ruscom Shores Conservation Area, *Essex* (Alexander Bloss, also found by Jerry Ball).  
 – one, 17 September, Pickering (Corner Marsh), *Durham* (Tom Cosburn).  
 – five, 14 October, Long Point Provincial Park (Old Cut), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Paul N. Prior).  
 1996 – one, 9 May, Erie Beach, *Kent* (Keith J. Burk, also found by James T. Burk, E.J. Burk).

**Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* (2/15)**

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, 21-22 May, Prince Edward Point, *Prince Edward* (Don Craighead, Eric A. Machell) - photo on file.

**Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* South Only, Before 1998 Only (2/50)**

- 1997 – one, first basic, 12-21 January, Confederation Park, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Robert Curry, also found by William G. Lamond, George Naylor).  
 – 75, basic, 15 March, Komoka, *Middlesex* (Ian Platt, Gavin C. Platt).  
 – six, basic, 5 April, Lakefield, *Peterborough* (Peter S. Burke, also found by Kim Caldwell, Anne Anthony, L. Anthony, Vanessa Lasenby, Julia Monkman).  
 1995 – two, basic, 14 April, Lindenwood, *Grey* (David R. Tannahill).  
 – one, definitive basic, *frontalis*, 23-26 September and 9 October, Arkona, *Lambton* (Alfred H. Rider, found by Peter Rombouts and Elly Rombouts) - photo on file.  
 1994 – one, basic, 1 September, Holland Landing, *York* (James R. Macey).

The record of 75 birds on 15 March 1997 is the largest number observed in



southern Ontario to date. Subspecies determination is not stated for most records, except when supported by clear photographs. The OBRC no longer requires documentation for records effective 1 January 1998.



Figure 2: Black Vulture at Prince Edward Point, *Prince Edward*, from 21-22 May 1997. Photo by *Don Craighead*.



Figure 3: Definitive basic Greater White-fronted Goose at Arkona, *Lambton*, from 23-26 September and 9 October 1995. Photo by *Alfred H. Rider*.

### Ross's Goose *Chen rossii* South Only (0/17)

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, white morph, 11-16 March, Etobicoke, *Toronto* (Terry Osborne, Glenn Coady, Craig S.A. McLauchlan, Frank Pinilla, found by Barbara Kalthoff) - photos on file.
- one, definitive basic, white morph, 15-17 and 26 March, Kingsville (15-16 and 26 March), and Hillman Marsh (17 March), *Essex* (Alan Wormington, John G. Keenleyside, found by David McNorton, Karen McNorton).
- one, definitive basic, white morph, 18 March, Fergus, *Wellington* (Richard Brown, also found by Robert Smalley, Sally Smalley).
- one, definitive basic, white morph, 2-3 April, Dundas, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Don Hough, Carole Wilkinson, Matthew Mills, H. Michael Street, John L. Olmsted) - photos on file.
- one, definitive basic, white morph, 5-9 April, King City (5-6 April) and Richmond Hill (6-9 April), *York* (James R. Macey, Norman C. Murr, Craig S.A. McLauchlan, Frank Pinilla, found by S. Cluff) - photos on file.

The occurrence of this species in the south continues to increase steadily, with all 17 accepted records occurring since 1991.

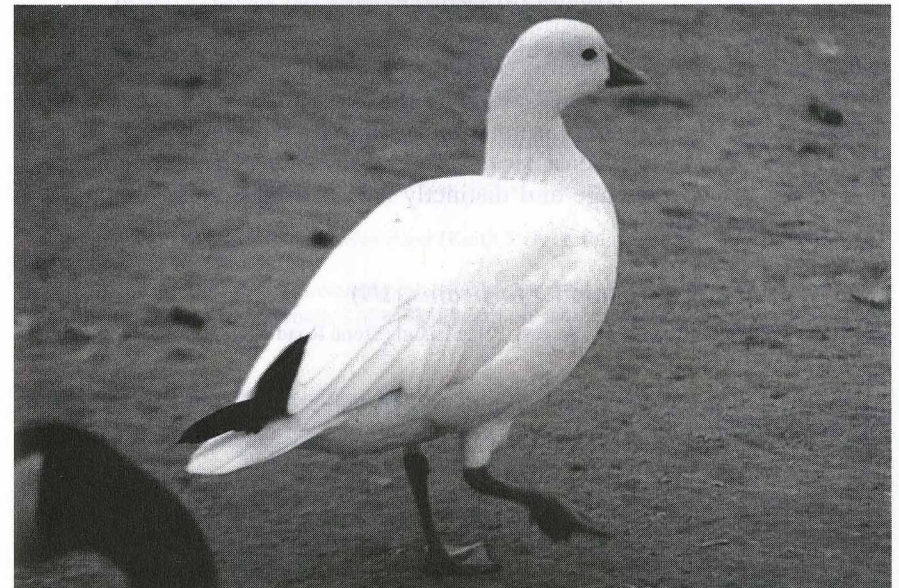


Figure 4: Definitive basic Ross's Goose at Dundas, *Hamilton- Wentworth*, from 2-3 April 1997. Photo by *Don Hough*.

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* North Only (0/6)

- 1996/97 – two, definitive basic, 18 August 1996 and 16 September 1997, Hurkett Cove Conservation Area, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott, Alan Wormington, also found by George A. Williams).
- 1996 – one, basic, female, 6 July - 29 October, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott) - photo on file.



There are additional sightings of two birds at Hurkett Cove from 10-24 May 1997 (Nicholas G. Escott, pers. comm.), and all of the sightings at this location are considered to pertain to the same birds.

#### **Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (1/21)**

- 1997 – one, definitive alternate, male, 16-17 February, Burlington, *Halton* (Terry Osborne).  
 – one, definitive alternate, male, 17 September - 3 October, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Alan Wormington, also found by Mark W. Jennings).

The first record for northern Ontario was also at Thunder Bay from 7-29 October 1995 (Dobos 1996).

#### **Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* South Only (2/11)**

- 1997 – one, first basic, male, 14 February, Stoney Creek, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos).  
 1996 – one, basic, female, 12 March - 6 April, Stoney Creek, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos).  
 – one, basic, female, *dresseri*, 21 March - 6 April, Stoney Creek, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos, found by Kevin C. Hannah).

The west end of Lake Ontario continues to be the best place in southern Ontario to locate this species, amongst the large flocks of mussel-feeding diving ducks. The female present from 21 March - 6 April 1996 was determined to be of the east coast race, *S.m. dresseri*, based on the combination of reddish-brown plumage and distinctly rounded end to the bill process (see Knapton 1997).

#### **Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus* (1/9)**

- 1995 – one, definitive basic, 24 August, Pelee Island (Stone Road Alvar), *Essex* (John Lamey).

#### **Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* (5/11)**

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, 11 May, Grimsby (Beamer Memorial Conservation Area), *Niagara* (Thomas F. Reavley, John Ryan, Paul Summerskill).  
 1996 – one, first basic, 11-12 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Ronald J. Pittaway).

The earliest accepted date for this species in Ontario is now 11 May. The bird at Grimsby was the first for the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch.

#### **“Dark Morph” Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* (\*1)**

- 1992 – one, definitive basic, dark morph, 18 August, Woodstock, *Oxford* (James M. Holdsworth).

The dark colour morph of Broad-winged Hawk is rare and mainly occurs in the extreme western portion of the species' breeding range through central Alberta, and is regularly encountered on migration through the eastern Great Plains (Clark and Wheeler 1987). There are two previous sight

records of this morph for Ontario, near Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay*, on 7 May 1985, and at Grimsby (Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch), *Niagara*, on 30 April 1977 (Escott 1986, Anonymous 1988).

#### **Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni* (8/26)**

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, light morph, 14 September, Binbrook, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (John G. Keenleyside, also found by Daniel R. Salisbury, Alec Dobson).  
 – one, definitive basic, light morph, 18 October, Port Stanley (Hawk Cliff), *Elgin* (William S. Clark).

#### **Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* South Only (1/35)**

- 1997 – one, alternate, 4-6 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (John M. Waud, Kevin A. McLaughlin).  
 – one, alternate, 5-8 May, Long Point (Courtright Ridge), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Jukka Jantunen, also found by Michael Enright, Paolo Viola).  
 – one, alternate, 9 August, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Robert Z. Dobos, also found by Barbara N. Charlton).

#### **American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* (7/51)**

- 1997 – two, definitive alternate, 18-25 May, Kingsville, *Essex* (James N. Flynn, found by David J. Milsom) - photos on file.  
 – one, alternate, 3 August, Blenheim, *Kent* (William J. McKitterick).  
 – one, alternate, 11 August, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Stuart Mackenzie).  
 1996 – one, alternate, 28 July, Thunder Bay (Mission Island), *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott).  
 – one, 27-28 August, Blenheim, *Kent* (Keith J. Burk, found by Steven Charbonneau) - photo on file.  
 1994 – one, 23 October - 2 November, Warwick, *Lambton* (Alfred H. Rider) - photo on file.  
 1993 – two, definitive alternate, 2 May, Southampton, *Bruce* (Mac Campbell, Shawn Gillick) - photos on file.

#### **Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* North Only (2/9)**

- 1997 – one, 14 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Howard Shapiro, also found by Ken Jones).

#### **“Palearctic” Dunlin *Calidris alpina arctica/schinzii* (\*1)**

- 1994 – one, alternate, 31 July - 1 August, Hamilton Harbour (Windermere Basin), *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Curry, William J. Crins, Kevin A. McLaughlin, also found by John L. Olmsted, James Heslop).

This unique bird was likely of the subspecies *C.a. arctica*, which breeds in northeast Greenland. However, this race is very difficult to differentiate from the subspecies *C.a. schinzii*, which breeds in Iceland, southeastern Greenland and Europe. Both races are smaller with shorter bills than the eastern North American subspecies, *C.a. hudsonia* (Ferns 1981). The Committee has decided to list this bird as being of either Palearctic Dunlin race, either of which would be a first record for Ontario. A detailed account of this record will appear in a future issue of *Ontario Birds* (Curry, in prep.).



### Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudus* South Only (3/20)

- 1996 – one, juvenal, dark morph, 27 August, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos).  
 – one, juvenal, light morph (found dead, fresh), 30 August, Long Point (Gravelly Bay), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Paul N. Prior, Robert Z. Dobos, found by Jeffrey Robinson) - specimen (skin) in LPBO, photos on file.  
 – five (three juvenal light morph, one juvenal dark/intermediate morph, one subadult), 6 September, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos, Daniel Campbell, Linda Burr, Kevin A. McLaughlin, also found by John L. Olmsted).  
 – three (one definitive alternate, two juvenal), 8 September, Fort Erie, *Niagara* (Alan Wormington, Robert Curry).  
 – five (two definitive alternate, three juvenal light morph), 14 September, Waverly Beach, *Niagara* (Richard W. Knapton, William C. D'Anna, also found by Drew Campbell, Marcy Foster, Brad Clements, Marcie Jacklin).  
 – one, definitive alternate, 17 September, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos).  
 – one, juvenal, dark/intermediate morph, 27 September, Burlington, *Halton* (Robert Z. Dobos).  
 – one, juvenal, light/intermediate morph, 20 October, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos).

The fall of 1996 saw an unprecedented number of Long-tailed Jaegers on the lower Great Lakes. The above listings consider multiple observations of birds on any given day to relate to one record for that date involving the minimum number of birds present based on plumage differences. It is possible that there is some duplication of birds involved with these records if birds were present for more than several days, but this is certainly offset by the fact that some jaegers sighted that fall were left unidentified by observers but were likely to have been Long-tailed. The 18 birds documented above can probably be considered to be a minimum number involved. It has been speculated that Hurricane Fran had some influence on the numbers of Long-tailed Jaegers on the Great Lakes in 1996, by transplanting birds from the Atlantic Ocean inland (as was unquestionably the case with Black-capped Petrel, Sooty Tern and Wilson's Storm-Petrel) (Curry 1996). However, the indication of a strong jaeger flight was noticed prior to Fran's passage on September 8, evidenced by the above records on 27 and 30 August and 6 September. Another likely effect of Fran was that of stalling southbound migrants that would have skipped over the Great Lakes, or possibly deflecting their route farther inland. Numbers of Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers on the Great Lakes were also high during fall of 1996, possibly the result of high lemming populations in the Arctic where these species breed (Ridout 1997). Typically, numbers of juvenile jaegers out-number adult birds on the Great Lakes (Sherony and Brock 1997), and this is reflected in the records above. The above records largely coincide with the peak migration of Long-taileds through the Great Lakes in mid-September (Sherony and Brock 1997).

### California Gull *Larus californicus* (0/18)

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, 9 January, Niagara Falls, *Niagara* (Dean DiTommaso).  
 1996 – one, definitive basic, 6-30 November, Queenston, *Niagara* (William C. D'Anna, found by Glenn Coady).  
 – one, definitive basic, 16-24 November, Queenston and Niagara Falls, *Niagara* (William C. D'Anna, Jon L. Dunn, found by Sharon Skelly).

This species has become a regular rarity at the Niagara River during late fall to early winter. It is uncertain if the 9 January 1997 bird is the same as one of the birds during November 1996. The two birds present during November 1996 were recognizably different in mantle shade. Some observers have suggested that two subspecies of California Gull were involved, based on Jehl (1987), who described a smaller, darker-mantled race (*L.c. californicus*) that breeds in the Great Basin states, and a larger, lighter-mantled race (*L.c. albertaensis*) from the Great Plains of northcentral United States and south-central Canada. The OBRC has not ruled on subspecies for California Gull records, pending availability of additional information. Observers are asked to carefully note size, structure and mantle shade of any future California Gulls sighted in Ontario.

### Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea* (15/7)

- 1997 – one, first basic, 1 and 4-5 January, Pickering, Whitby and Oshawa, *Durham* (1 January), and Presqu'île Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (4-5 January) (Matthew L. Holder, David Worthington, Craig S.A. McLaughlan, Martha Robinson, also found by Phillip J. Holder, Susan M. Holder).

After initially being seen flying east along the Lake Ontario shoreline at Pickering, this bird was observed later that day by others who were alerted to its discovery at Whitby and Oshawa as it continued eastwards. It was subsequently refound farther east at Presqu'île Provincial Park a few days later.

### Razorbill *Alca torda* (0/5)

- 1997 – nine, alternate, 18-23 May, Burlington, *Halton* (H. Michael Street, James R. Macey, also found by William F. Smith).

While nine birds were reported on 18 May, only eight birds were sighted on 23 May, with no observations between these dates.

### White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* (2/4)

- 1997 – one, basic, 19-20 October, Lively, *Sudbury* (Donald G. Ferguson, also found by Kim Ferguson, Lorraine Ferguson, Don Ferguson) - photos on file.

This, the sixth record for Ontario, is the third occurrence in the past five years, all of which have been during the fall.

### Chuck-will's-widow *Caprimulgus carolinensis* After 1989 Only (\* /8)

- 1997 – one, basic, female, 11 May, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Steve Mulkeen,



also found by Paul N. Prior, Jody Allair).

- 1996 – one, basic, female, 14 May, Beachville, *Oxford* (James M. Holdsworth).

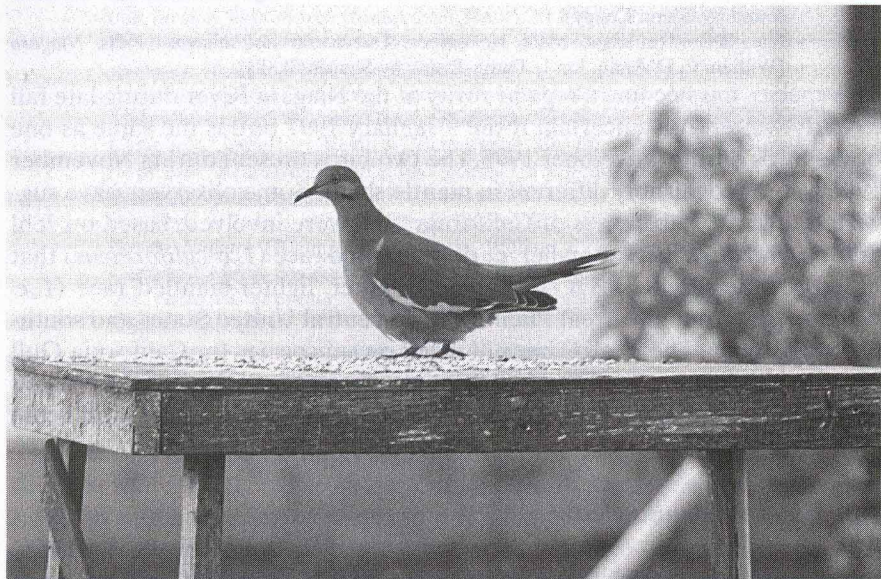


Figure 5: White-winged Dove at Lively, *Sudbury*, from 19-20 October 1997. Photo by Donald G. Ferguson.

#### **Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus* (2/10)**

- 1995 – one, definitive basic, male, 17 October - 28 November, Owen Sound, *Grey* (David W. Fidler, Shawn Gielck, William Waterton, found by Doug Yeo, Agnes Yeo) - photo on file.

#### **Hummingbird species *Selasphorus* sp. (0/4)**

- 1996 – one, first basic, female, 20 October - 15 December, Union, *Essex* (F. Gladys Fisher, Alan Wormington, James N. Flynn) - photos on file.

This bird, either a Rufous or Allen's Hummingbird, was unidentifiable to species. Typically, in-hand measurements are needed in order to separate females or immatures of these species. Photographs of the upperparts of this bird show buffy edges to the green body feathers, allowing it to be aged as a first basic, and the mostly green middle rectrices indicate that it was a female (Heidcamp 1997).

#### **Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* Before 1998 Only (8/65)**

- 1997 – one, alternate, 17-20 May, Eatonville, *Kent* (Blake A. Mann, found by Keith J. Burk, Steven Charbonneau).  
– one, alternate, 2 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Howard Shapiro, also found by Jul K. Wojnowski, Daniel G. Derbyshire).

- one, alternate, 11 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Daniel G. Derbyshire, also found by Jul K. Wojnowski, Cole Snell).  
– one, 13 September, Whitby (Lynde Shores Conservation Area), *Durham* (Margaret J.C. Bain, Joyce Closs).  
– one, 14 September, Pelee Island (Stone Rd. Alvar), *Essex* (Jarmo V. Jalava).

The OBRC no longer requires documentation for this species for both southern and northern Ontario effective 1 January 1998.

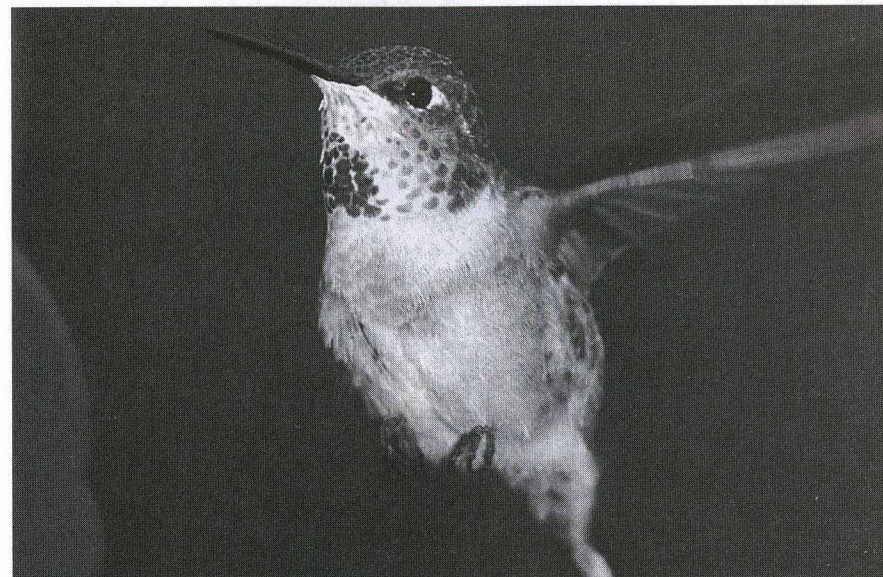


Figure 6: First basic female *Selasphorus* hummingbird species at Union, *Essex*, from 20 October - 15 December 1996. Photo by James N. Flynn.

#### **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* (3/35)**

- 1996 – one, definitive basic, 5 September - 4 October, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex* (Garth Riley, Alan Wormington, also found by Nancy McPherson) - photo on file.

It is possible that this bird was the same as the one present at the same location during the fall of 1995.

#### **Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* (0/1)**

- 1997 – one, 3 June, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, James N. Flynn) - photos on file.

This is the first record of this species for Ontario, coincidentally occurring just prior to the official split of the Solitary Vireo complex (AOU 1997). See Wormington (1997b) for a detailed account of this record.



### Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* (0/13)

- 1997 – one, basic, 21 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Christopher Burris, also found by Lynne Jackson).

### Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* (7/16)

- 1997 – one, first basic, *leucorhoa*, 31 August - 1 September, Ottawa, *Ottawa-Carleton* (Eve D. Ticknor, Richard Ticknor, William J. Crins) - photo on file.  
 1995 – one, first basic, 15 October, Oshawa, *Durham* (James P. Coey, Glenn Coady, found by E. Dunhill) - photos on file.

The above two records provide the earliest accepted fall date (31 August) and ties the latest accepted fall date (15 October) for Ontario.



Figure 7: First basic Northern Wheatear at Oshawa, *Durham*, on 15 October 1995. Photo by Glenn Coady.

### Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides* (2/19)

- 1997 – one, definitive basic, male, 10 April, Dorion, *Thunder Bay* (Jody Allair, Michael Jones).

### Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi* (4/25)

- 1995/96 – one, basic, 30 December - 3 March, Lurgan Beach, *Bruce* (Martin Parker, Shawn Gielck, also found by David Kilgour, Fred M. Helleiner).

### Varied Thrush *Ixoreus naevius* Before 1994 Only for South, and Before 1998 Only for North (5/51)

- 1995 – one, basic, male, 4-18 November, Mokomon, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott, found by Doug Johnson) - photo on file.  
 1988 – one, basic, male, 14 December, Elliot Lake, *Algoma* (Gordon Wereley) - photo on file.  
 The Elliot Lake bird may have been present through the winter of 1988-89; however, no precise dates are available. The OBRC no longer requires documentation for sightings in northern Ontario effective 1 January 1998, or for sightings in southern Ontario effective 1 January 1994.

### Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus* (3/5)

- 1997 – one, 16 March - 9 April, Wallaceburg, *Kent* (Blake A. Mann, Kayo J. Roy) - photos on file.  
 1996 – one, 28 October, Fort Frances, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms, also found by Maggie Simms).

These are the seventh and eighth records accepted for Ontario, and the first since 1987. The date of the Wallaceburg bird, the earliest record for Ontario, seems remarkably early for a southwestern passerine vagrant. The Fort Frances bird provided the latest date for the province.

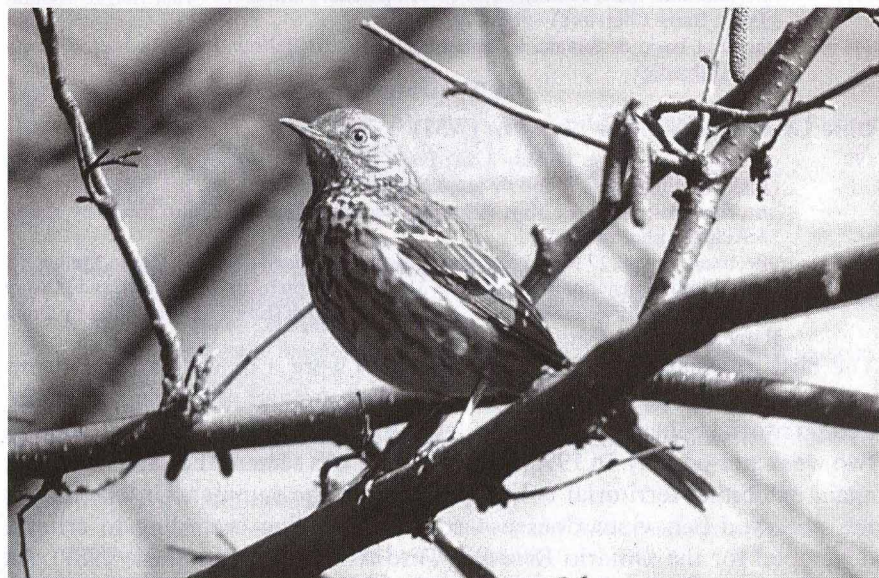


Figure 8: Sage Thrasher at Wallaceburg, *Kent*, from 16 March - 9 April 1997. Photo by Kayo J. Roy.



**Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus* North Only (1/2)**

- 1997 – one, first basic or female, 15 September, Marathon, *Thunder Bay* ([Alan Wormington](#), also found by Mark W. Jennings).

There are now four records (three reviewed by OBRC) for northern Ontario.

**Black-throated Gray Warbler *Dendroica nigrescens* (4/7)**

- 1997 – one, alternate, male, 2 May, Beachville, *Oxford* ([James M. Holdsworth](#)).  
 – one, definitive basic, male, 22-23 October, Burlington, *Halton* ([Mark W. Jennings](#)).

There have been five records in the past six years (of the total 11 accepted Ontario records).

**Kirtland's Warbler *Dendroica kirtlandii* (7/12)**

- 1997 – one, alternate, male, 24 May, St. Williams Forestry Station, *Haldimand-Norfolk* ([Raymond Geras](#), Sean Macey, also found by Terrie Smith).  
 1996 – one, alternate, male, 14 May, Stoney Point, *Essex* ([Gail Seamans](#), also found by Martin Schlabach, Nate Schlabach, Tom Beachy, Brian Beachy, Ellie Baker).  
 – one, 16 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* ([Ryan R. Sokolowski](#), [John Luce](#), also found by Mark O'Connor, Robert Frew).

**Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* (2/14)**

- 1997 – one, alternate, male, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* ([Barb Mayer](#), [Helmut Mayer](#), Barry Cheriére) - photo on file.  
 – one, first basic or female, 1 September, Toronto (Balfour Park Ravine), *Toronto* ([David Beadle](#)).

**Blue Grosbeak *Guiraca caerulea* (7/31)**

- 1997 – one, first basic, male, 11 May, Long Point (Courtright Ridge), *Haldimand-Norfolk* ([Jukka Jantunen](#), also found by Stephane Menu, Carl Rothfels, Jim Tuck).  
 – one, first basic, male, 13 May, Pickering, *Durham* ([Dan Shire](#), also found by Karen McKillop) - photos on file.  
 – one, basic, female, 17 May, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* ([Steve Mulkeen](#)).  
 1995/96 – two, definitive basic, male and female, 31 May - 4 September 1995 (pair), and 21 May - 12 September 1996 (male only), Sleepy Hollow, *Kent* (Keith J. Burk, found by Doug Barnett, Nancy Barnett) - photos on file.

The birds present in 1995 at Sleepy Hollow were a mated pair, and were observed copulating. The male was present all summer as it sang and exhibited territorial behaviour, while the female was evasive and seen for about a two week period only. In 1996, only the male was seen at the same location, again exhibiting territorial behaviour through the summer. Unfortunately, the observed behaviour does not confirm breeding according to criteria developed for the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (Cadman *et al.* 1987). As such, this species cannot be added to the list of breeding birds for Ontario based on this record.

**Dickcissel *Spiza americana* North Only (1/8)**

- 1997 – one, alternate, male, 9 May, Wilson Creek, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms, found by Audrey Black).  
 – one, alternate, male, 17-22 May, Kenabeek, *Timiskaming* ([Barry Kinch](#), also found by Kelsey Kinch, Trevor Kinch) - photos on file.

**Eastern Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* North Only (2/6)**

- 1997 – one, basic, male, 2 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* ([Daniel G. Derbyshire](#), also found by Jul K. Wojnowski).  
 – one, first basic, male, 12 November - 20 December, Kenabeek, *Timiskaming* ([Barry Kinch](#), also found by Kelsey Kinch) - photos and video on file.

**Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* (0/7)**

- 1997 – one, basic, male, 30 April, Toronto Island, *Toronto* ([Craig S.A. McLauchlan](#)).

**Field Sparrow *Spizella pusilla* North Only (0/13)**

- 1997 – one, 19 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* ([Jul K. Wojnowski](#), also found by Daniel G. Derbyshire, Cole Snell, Howard Shapiro, Erin Stephens) - photo on file.  
 1996 – one, 28 October - 2 November, Netitishi Point, *Cochrane* ([Roy B.H. Smith](#), also found by Glenn Coady, Hugh G. Currie, David R. Tannahill).

The bird on 19 May 1997 was captured and banded by Thunder Cape Bird Observatory (TCBO).

**Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* (5/42)**

- 1997 – one, first basic, 3 September, Algonquin Provincial Park (Odenback on Radiant Lake), *Nipissing* ([Colin D. Jones](#), Ronald G. Tozer).  
 1995 – one, alternate, 25-26 April, Guilds, *Kent* (Keith J. Burk, found by Peter Woodliffe) - photos on file.

**Lark Bunting *Calamospiza melanocorys* (3/21)**

- 1996 – one, alternate, female, 21 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* ([Jul K. Wojnowski](#), also found by David Okines).  
 – one, first alternate, female, 3-4 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* ([Jul K. Wojnowski](#), [Jennifer Sipkens](#), also found by David Okines, Brian Ratcliff) - photo on file.

The bird on 3-4 June was captured and banded by TCBO, and was considered to be a different bird than the one on 21 May at the same location.

**Baird's Sparrow *Ammodramus bairdii* (0/1)**

- 1996 – one, alternate, male, 2-9 July, Rainy River, *Rainy River* (Blake A. Mann, Jerry H. Guild, Donald E. Perks, found by John Lamey).

This is the first accepted record of this species for Ontario. This prairie grassland species breeds as close as southcentral Manitoba (Godfrey 1986), and it seems likely that it may occur from time to time in extreme western Ontario.



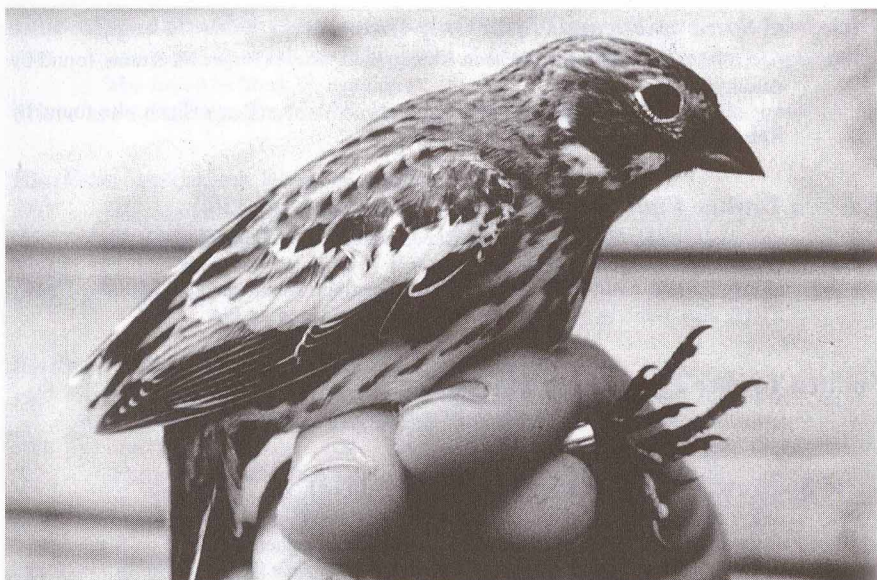


Figure 9: Female Lark Bunting captured and banded at Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*, from 3-4 June 1996. Photo by *Jennifer Sipkens*.

#### **Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum* North Only (1/1)**

- 1997 – one, 4 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Jul K. Wojnowski, George Holborn, also found by Daniel G. Derbyshire, Howard Shapiro) - photo on file.
- 1966 – one, first basic, 8-13 November, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Elizabeth A. Walker) - photo on file.

These are the first two records accepted by the OBRC for northern Ontario. James (1991) indicates that Grasshopper Sparrow occurs rarely in western Rainy River District; however, sightings from there have never been documented and reviewed by the Committee. The 4 June 1997 bird was captured and banded by TCBO. Subspecies determination was not possible for either of these records.

#### **Henslow's Sparrow *Ammodramus henslowii* After 1992 Only (\*1)**

- 1996 – one, alternate, male, 11 June - 2 July, Big Island, *Prince Edward* (Jean Iron, Ronald J. Pittaway, found by Terry Sprague).

This is the first report of this species that the OBRC has reviewed since it was added to the Review List in 1993 due to its rapidly declining numbers as a breeder in Ontario. Despite the fact that it occurs as a rare but annual spring migrant at Point Pelee, records away from there have become much rarer and should certainly be documented.



Figure 10: Grasshopper Sparrow captured and banded at Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*, on 4 June 1997. Photo by *George Holborn*.

#### **Harris's Sparrow *Zonotrichia querula* South Only, Before 1998 Only (3/30)**

- 1995/96 – one, first basic, 15 November - 6 January, Hanover, *Grey* (Dean G. Newton, found by Lorraine Hatch) - photos on file.
- 1995 – one, definitive basic, 6-28 January, Sable, *Middlesex* (Alfred H. Rider) - photo on file.
- Effective 1 January 1998, documentation for this species in southern Ontario is no longer required by the OBRC.

#### **“Gray-headed” Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis caniceps* group (\*12)**

- 1997 – one, 25 May, Huntsville, *Muskoka* (Brenda J. Laking, William J. Crins, Ronald G. Tozer) - photo on file.
- 1989 – one, 9 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (John H. Kreeft, Ginny Kreeft, William H.P. Graham) - photos on file.

These are the first two records for Ontario of this phylogenetic group from the western United States, which is currently included in the Dark-eyed Junco species. Both of these records pertain to the more migratory northern subspecies *J.h. caniceps*, typified by their pale upper mandibles, clearly shown in the respective photographs for each record. The less migratory southern subspecies in this group, *J.h. dorsalis* or “Red-backed” Junco, has a dark upper mandible (Pittaway 1993, Rising 1996).



### Smith's Longspur *Calcarius pictus* South Only (1/2)

1997 – one, female, 18 May, Algonquin Provincial Park (Two Rivers Airfield), *Nipissing* (R. Douglas McRae, J. David Andrews, Ronald G. Tozer, William J. Crins, James R. Macey, also found by Tom Hablitzel, Jean Morse) - photos on file.

This is only the third accepted record for southern Ontario. The previous two were both from Long Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, on 31 October - 2 November 1984 (Wormington 1986), and on 20 April 1980 (Wormington 1985). This recent bird was identified as a female, based on wing covert and facial patterns as described in Dunn and Beadle (1998).



Figure 11: Female Smith's Longspur at Algonquin Provincial Park (Two Rivers Airfield), *Nipissing*, on 18 May 1997. Photo by J. David Andrews.

### Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* (1/6)

1993/94 – one, basic, female, 24 December - 14 April, Hungry Hollow, *Middlesex* (Alfred H. Rider, found by Peter Chapman) - photo on file.

This long staying bird, that was enjoyed by many, is the sixth of seven records for Ontario, preceeding the bird at Black River, *Kenora*, on 18-20 April 1994 (Pittaway 1995b).

### Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch *Leucosticte tephrocotis* (1/5)

1997 – one, male, circa late March, Fort Frances, *Rainy River* (Linda Moulton) - photos on file.



Figure 12: Female Brambling at Hungry Hollow, *Middlesex*, from 24 December 1993 - 14 April 1994. Photo by Alfred H. Rider.

## Not Accepted Records

### Identification Uncertain

In most reports listed below, the documentation provided was found to be insufficient to establish the identity of the species claimed. In very few cases did the Committee consider that the identification was actually an error. Any of these reports may be resubmitted for further review if new supporting evidence is provided.

- 1997 – Northern Gannet, one, 19 April, Napanee, *Lennox and Addington*.  
 – Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*), one, 1 August, St. Charles, *Sudbury*.  
 – Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus*), one, 25-26 July, Cheapside, *Haldimand-Norfolk*.  
 – Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), one, 15 April, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.  
 – Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*), one, 15 June, Grimsby, *Niagara*.  
 – Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*), one, 15 May, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk*.  
 – "Lawrence's" Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera* x *V. pinus*), 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.  
 – Kirtland's Warbler, one, 19 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Kent*.  
 – Kirtland's Warbler, one, 21 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.  
 – Swainson's Warbler (*Limnithlypis swainsonii*), one, 28 September, Dundas, *Hamilton-Wentworth*.  
 – Blue Grosbeak, one, 5 July, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.



- Lark Sparrow, two, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*), one, 24-25 May, North York, *Toronto*.
- 1996 – Black Vulture, one, 5 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Greater White-fronted Goose, one, 25 February, Hillman Marsh, *Essex*.
- Swainson's Hawk, one, 28 December, Cheapside, *Haldimand- Norfolk*.
- Swallow-tailed Kite, one, 18 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex*.
- Mississippi Kite, one, 19-21 May, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex*.
- Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*), 27 August, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Ivory Gull, one, 17 June, Barrie Island, *Manitoulin*.
- Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*), 27 July, Evansville, *Manitoulin*.
- Blue Grosbeak, one, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Western Tanager, one, 17 May, Hillman Marsh, *Essex*.
- Western Tanager, one, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- 1995 – Blue Grosbeak, one, 3 August, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- Blue Grosbeak, one, 16 December, Massie, *Grey*.
- “White-winged” Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis aikenii*), 17 October, Wingham, *Huron*.

The above record was originally reviewed by the 1996 Committee but was not accepted (Dobos 1997). At the request of the contributor, the report was sent for outside expert opinion, along with an additional report of “White-winged” Junco on 18 October 1986 which was on file at the ROM (see below). Both birds had been captured and banded by the contributor. Based on the expert opinions received, the 1997 Committee agreed to reconsider the 1995 report with the expert comments being viewed as “new evidence”. However, it was the decision of this Committee that the documentation submitted did not conclusively support the identification of this subspecies which occurs in the northcentral United States. There are as yet no substantiated records from Ontario (see Pittaway 1993).

- 1994 – Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*), one, 4 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* - photo on file.
- Willow Flycatcher, one, 5 June, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* - photo on file.
- Willow Flycatcher, one, 20 August, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*.
- 1993 – Willow Flycatcher, one, 15 August, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*.
- 1992 – Willow Flycatcher, one, 31 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* - photo on file.
- Willow Flycatcher, one, 31 August, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*.
- 1991 – Willow Flycatcher, one, 22 August, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay*.

The 1995 OBRC had originally reviewed the above seven records of Willow Flycatcher, but had deferred a final decision on the records pending additional information. These records all involve birds which were captured and banded at Thunder Cape by TCBO. Identification (and separation from Alder Flycatcher, *E. alnorum*) was primarily based on in-hand measurements using culmen length and wing formula compared to a statistical discriminant function analysis described by Stein (1963). However, this method was later shown to be unreliable (Seutin 1991), and it is no longer used by the Long Point Bird Observatory to separate “Traill's” Flycatchers (Jon McCracken, pers. comm.). In reconsidering these records, the 1997

Committee felt that they could not be confidently accepted based on the current knowledge of in-hand criteria for separating “Traill's” Flycatcher.

1986 – “White-winged” Dark-eyed Junco, 18 October, Wingham, *Huron*.

See comments above for 17 October 1995 record of “White-winged” Junco.

## Not Accepted Records

### Identification Accepted, Origin Questionable

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

- 1997 – Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*), one, 2 March, Rowan Mills, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Robert Curry, also found by John L. Olmsted, Richard G. Snider).

The identity of this bird was clearly established, but the origin of the bird from a wild population in western North America cannot be determined. The status of Trumpeter Swan in Ontario in general was discussed at the OBRC policy meeting in October 1997. It was agreed to remove it from the Review List for the south (see above), since its inclusion causes confusion with observers regarding the status of introduced birds present around the province. The only way to know for certain if a bird originated from a wild population from western North America would be through a banding return or recovery. The OBRC still wishes to consider any such records, and would seek documentation if any such records were to come to light. The OBRC would also still be interested in historical records of this species, if any exist.

## Updates/Corrections to Previous OBRC Reports

### 1996 Report (*Ontario Birds* 15: 47-66)

- under Eared Grebe, 11 May - 2 September 1996, change last date to “18 August”.
- under Snowy Egret, add “North Only Until 1991” after scientific name.
- under Black-tailed Godwit, add “Glenn Coady” as a contributor.
- under Ross's Gull, add “Bruce Falls” as a contributor, and change “photos on file” to “photos and video on file”.
- under Arctic Tern, add “After 1990 Only” after “South Only”.
- under Thick-billed Murre, delete “South Only”.
- under Chuck-will's-widow, add “After 1989 Only” after scientific name.
- under Ash-throated Flycatcher, add “Glenn Coady” as a contributor.
- under Fork-tailed Flycatcher, 25-28 September 1996, add “Glenn Coady” as a contributor.
- under Mountain Bluebird, 26 November - 22 December 1994, add “, Douglas C.



- Sadler" after "found by David Johnson".
- under Spotted Towhee, 17 December 1995 - 3 March 1996, add "Glenn Coady" as a contributor, and change "Alfred Kuhnigk" to "Albert Kuhnigk".

### 1995 Report (*Ontario Birds* 14: 50-71)

- under Least Tern, add "Glenn Coady" as a contributor.
- under Chuck-will's-widow, add ",After 1989 Only" after scientific name.

### 1994 Report (*Ontario Birds* 13: 46-65)

- under American White Pelican, add "South Only, Before 1994 Only" after scientific name.
- under Eurasian Wigeon, add "North Only After 1993" after scientific name.
- under Gyrfalcon, add ", Before 1994 Only" after "South Only".
- under Piping Plover, add "South Only" after scientific name.
- under Pomarine Jaeger, add "North Only After 1993" after scientific name.
- under Laughing Gull, add "North Only After 1993" after scientific name.
- under Chuck-will's-widow, add ",After 1989 Only" after scientific name.
- under Varied Thrush, add "North Only After 1993" after scientific name.

### 1993 Report (*Ontario Birds* 12: 41-58)

- under Chuck-will's-widow, add ",After 1989 Only" after scientific name.

### 1992 Report (*Ontario Birds* 11: 46-63)

- under Snowy Egret, add "North Only Until 1991" after scientific name.

### 1991 Report (*Ontario Birds* 10: 43-63)

- under American White Pelican, add "South Only" after scientific name.
- under Snowy Egret, add "North Only Until 1991" after scientific name.
- under Piping Plover, add "South Only" after scientific name.
- under Chuck-will's-widow, add ",After 1989 Only" after scientific name.

### 1990 Report (*Ontario Birds* 9: 18-44)

- under Dark Ibis sp., 14 October 1989, add "Douglas Harding" as a contributor.
- under Chuck-will's-widow, add ",After 1989 Only" after scientific name.

### 1989 Report (*Ontario Birds* 8: 4-33)

- under American White Pelican, 24 June 1989, add "Kathy Parker, Martin Parker" as contributors.

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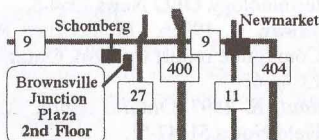
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