

## Articles

### Ontario Bird Records Committee Report for 2003

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#### Introduction

The Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) evaluates documentation that it receives of any record of a species or recognizable form that is on the Review List for Ontario (see [www.ofo.ca/obrc](http://www.ofo.ca/obrc)). This 22nd annual report deals with the results of the adjudication of 115 records reviewed by the OBRC during 2003, of which 88% were accepted. In addition, reports of a Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*) have been forwarded to outside experts for evaluation, and a decision by OBRC is still pending. A total of 118 observers submitted documentation for review by the 2003 committee. Reports were submitted by a wide range of birders, from experts to novices, and often were accompanied by photographs (prints, digital images), copies of field notes, sketches, and, in several cases, digital videotapes.

The quality of the reports submitted generally was good, with thorough descriptions and accounts of the circumstances relevant to the observations usually being provided. However, one trend seems to be emerging. With the ease of posting digital images onto the OFO web-

site, there is a tendency to rely on the visual images as the only source of data to document records. Written reports of the details and circumstances of some of these observations are not being submitted. We urge observers to submit written reports to accompany the images that they send to OBRC or post on the OFO website. Such reports are very helpful in providing context for the photographic evidence.

The members of the 2003 committee were David D. Beadle, William J. Crins (non-voting secretary), Robert Curry (chair), David H. Elder, Christopher J. Escott, Nicholas G. Escott, Ronald J. Pittaway, and Ronald G. Tozer (Figure 1). Mark K. Peck continued to serve in the role of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) liaison (non-voting) to the OBRC in 2003.

The official Ontario bird checklist has increased by one species to 476 species, with the addition of Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri*).

#### Listing of Records

The format for listing the number of accepted records for each

species remains the same as that used last year (Crins 2003) and in the previous year (Roy 2002). A single number is used to indicate the total number of accepted records of a Review List species. The former trinomial and binomial systems no longer are used. Accepted records are arranged taxonomically by their English and scientific names following the Seventh Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (American Ornithologists' Union 1998) and its 42nd supplement (American Ornithologists' Union 2000). 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 that of Humphrey and Parkes (1959). For a detailed explanation of plumage and molt terminology, see Pittaway (2000). The names of all contributors of documentation are listed. Those contributors who are known to be the discoverers of the bird also are underlined. Others present when the bird was found, but who did not submit reports, are listed when known.

The committee attempts to verify documented information prior to the acceptance and publication of a record. However, inaccuracies do creep in from time to time. The committee welcomes written communication to the secretary from anyone with pertinent information

that would correct or strengthen any record. There may be occasions where dates or other listed details in a record differ from those quoted in other published sources.

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 obtained from the voting members. These reports, as well as documentation for all accepted records, are kept on permanent file at the ROM. A "not accepted" report can be reconsidered by the OBRC if new evidence, in the form of additional documentation, is submitted to the committee for review. Researchers and other interested individuals are welcome to examine any of the filed reports at the ROM, but an appointment is necessary. Please write to Mark K. Peck, Natural History Department, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6 (e-mail: [markp@rom.on.ca](mailto:markp@rom.on.ca) or telephone 416-586-5523).

#### Changes to the Review List

The first documented records of Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*) in northern Ontario have led to the addition of this species to the Review List for northern Ontario. Brewer's Sparrow, noted above, is added to the Review List for northern Ontario, as well.



### Acknowledgements

The OBRC would like to extend its appreciation to the many observers who took the time to submit documentation of their observations of rare birds in 2003. We thank the following people who assisted the committee in the acquisition of additional data and other material evidence that supplemented the information submitted directly by observers and committee members: Kenneth F. Abraham, Gordon Bellerby, Colin Bowen, Robert A. Bracken, Terry Carr, Allen T. Chartier, Bruce M. Di Labio, Robert Z. Dobos, Sandra Eadie, Christian Friis, Christina Lewis, Jon D. McCracken, Mark K. Peck, Ian M. Richards, Ronald C. Ridout, Kayo J.

Roy, Sarah E. Rupert, R. Terry Sprague, and Alan Wormington.

The committee also is indebted to Mark Cranford for his continuing efforts in ensuring that ONT-BIRDS (listserv of the Ontario Field Ornithologists) remains a useful source of information on rare birds appearing in Ontario. In addition, the photographic pages on the OFO website, maintained by Sandra Eadie, provide an excellent source of documentation for rarities. These sources of information make the secretary's job of securing documentation much more efficient. Finally, I want to thank the members of the 2003 committee for their support and assistance during the year.



**Figure 1:** Ontario Bird Records Committee members for 2003. Left to right, standing: Ron Tozer, Bob Curry, Dave Elder, Chris Escott, David Beadle; seated: Bill Crins, Nick Escott, Ron Pittaway. Not in photo: Mark Peck. Photo by *Mark Peck*.



**Figure 2:** Little Blue Heron in alternate plumage present at Point Pelee National Park, Essex, on 13 May 2003. Photo by *Alan Wormington*.



**Figure 3:** Two Cattle Egrets present at Moosonee, Cochrane, between 13 and 16 October 2003. Photo by *Alan Wormington*.





**Figure 4:** Glossy Ibis in definitive basic plumage present at Holiday Harbour, Chatham-Kent, between 17 and 30 October 2003. Photo by James N. Flynn.



**Figure 5:** White-faced Ibis in definitive alternate plumage photographed at Sturgeon Creek, Essex, on 5 May 2003. Photo by Stephen T. Pike.



**Figure 6:** Band-tailed Pigeon in definitive basic plumage present at Westree, Sudbury, between 26 September and 20 October 2003. Photo by Charles J. Whitelaw.



**Figure 7:** Eurasian Collared-Dove present at Marysville, Hastings, between 5 and 17 May 2003. Photo by Albert Boisvert.





**Figure 8:** White-winged Dove in basic plumage present at Kakabeka Falls, *Thunder Bay*, between 14 and 19 June 2003. Photo by *Brian Rusnick*.



**Figure 9:** Cave Swallow in basic plumage, one of two found at Erieau, *Chatham-Kent*, on 8 November 2003. Photo by *Alan Wormington*.



**Figure 10:** Townsend's Solitaire in basic plumage present at Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*, from 28 October until 17 November 2003. Photo by *Stephen T. Pike*.



**Figure 11:** Male Kirtland's Warbler in alternate plumage present at Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*, on 17 May 2003. Photo by *Barry S. Cheriére*.





**Figure 12: Male Brewer's Sparrow in alternate plumage at Thunder Cape, Thunder Bay, on 27 May 2003. Photo by Nicholas G. Escott.**



**Figure 13: Lark Sparrow in definitive alternate plumage present at Point Pelee National Park, Essex, on 3 May 2003. Photo by Brett Groves.**

## Accepted Records

### Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* North Only (11)

2003 - one, alternate, 29-30 May, Rainy River, *Rainy River* (David H. Elder, found by Sid Hadlington).

This species has not yet been confirmed as a nester at the Rainy River sewage lagoons, *Rainy River*, but it has now been present there during at least a portion of the breeding season for three consecutive years (2001-2003).

### Black-capped Petrel *Pterodroma hasitata* (26)

2003 - one, 23 September, Waverly Beach, *Niagara* (Winnie Poon, David R. Don, Willie D'Anna, William W. Watson, found by Alan Wormington, David D. Beadle).

- one, adult, basic, male, *P. h. hasitata*, 27 September, Waverly Beach, *Niagara* (Brandon R. Holden) - specimen (skin) in ROM (#91639).

A great deal of anticipation among birders preceded the arrival of Hurricane Isabel in southern Ontario on 19 September 2003, because of the possibility of storm-borne vagrants. Although there seem to have been fewer hurricane-associated birds than were expected, several significant records were documented. Among them were two Black-capped Petrels, one of which was found dead several days after the hurricane had passed.

### Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (4)

2003 - one, 22 September, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton* (Daniel R. Salisbury, Alan Wormington).

This bird was associated with the passage of Hurricane Isabel. Previous records of this species include a specimen from Gull Lake, *Muskoka*, in the spring of 1897 or 1898, a specimen from Long Beach, *Niagara*, on 14 August 1955, likely associated with Hurricane Connie (Roy 2001), and three birds seen on 10 September 1996 at Waverly Beach, *Niagara*, associated with Hurricane Fran (Dobos 1998).

### Storm-Petrel species *Oceanites* or *Oceanodroma* species (3)

2003 - one, 22 September, Port Bruce, *Elgin* (David A. Martin).

- one, 27 September, Crescent Beach, *Niagara* (Alfred L. Adamo).

- one, 27 September, Long Point (Tip), *Norfolk* (Christian Artuso).

These three records of unidentifiable storm-petrels, seen under less than ideal circumstances, at fairly long distances or in strong winds, were associated with the passage of Hurricane Isabel, as well.

### Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* (28)

2002 - one, juvenal, 11 and 15 November; 11 November, Shirley's Bay; 15 November, Ottawa, *Ottawa* (Philip Wright).



**Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* (50)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Diego Garcia-Bellido, Jean H. Iron, Alan Wormington) – photos on file.

**Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* North Only (18)**

- 2003 - one, 8 October, Gowganda, *Timiskaming* (Gertrude Trudel, also found by Paul Trudel) – photos on file.  
 - two, 13-16 October, Moosonee, *Cochrane* (Alan Wormington, Peter Kapeshesit, found by Dan Ryder) – photos on file.  
 - one, 20 October, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Allan G. Harris).  
 - one, mid October 2003, Blake Township, *Thunder Bay* (Sharon Walker) – photo on file.

Previous records of Cattle Egrets from northern Ontario all occurred between 20 October and 8 November (Dobos 1998). Thus, the record from 8 October in Gowganda broadens the window of occurrence in the north.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* (34)**

- 2003 - one, first alternate, late April – 18 May, Echo Bay, *Algoma* (Don Hall, Vivian Hall) – photos on file.

**White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* (3)**

- 1970 - one, juvenal, 27 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Joseph P. Kleiman, T. Dennis Coskren, Dennis E. Rupert, Alfred H. Rider, also found by Jeffrey A. Greenhouse, William W. Smith, Norm Chesterfield, Ray Knight).

An observation probably involving the same bird has been documented at Harsen's Island, Lake St. Clair, Michigan, on 19-26 September 1970 (Payne 1983). This location is approximately 77 km due north of Point Pelee. Bain (1992) and Roy (2000) summarized the two previously published records of White Ibis in Ontario. A full description of one of these records and the associated circumstances, from Turkey Point, *Norfolk*, on 12-30 October 1991, has been published by Lamey (1991). The present record, from 1970, predates the other two reports by over 20 years. James (1991) listed two additional reports of this species for which documentation has not yet been reviewed by the Committee.

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (42)**

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 17-30 October, Holiday Harbour, *Chatham-Kent* (Dean J. Ware, James N. Flynn, Alan Wormington, Russ Jones) – photos on file.  
 2002 - one, alternate, 28 April – 1 May, Aylmer, *Elgin* (David A. Martin, found by Gordon Longhurst).

A note on the feeding behaviour of the Holiday Harbour bird was published by Horvath (2004).

**White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* (3)**

- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 5 May, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex* (Stephen T. Pike, Sam Barone, found by Edward P. LeBlanc) – photos on file.

It is highly likely that an unidentified dark ibis reported by Alan

Wormington near the entrance to Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*, late on 4 May, involved the same bird. The circumstances surrounding this third documented occurrence have been described by Wormington (2003a). The previous two records both occurred in 1995, one in Darlington and Bowmanville, *Durham*, on 20-21 July, and the other in Etobicoke, *Toronto*, on 21 September (Dobos 1996, Wormington 2003a).

**Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* (45)**

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 9 August, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).  
 - one, 8 September, Townsend, *Haldimand* (Tom Thomas).  
 2002 - one, 27 April, Mer Bleue, *Ottawa* (Langis Siros).

**Ross's Goose *Chen rossii* South Only (38)**

- 2003 - two, basic, white morph, 12 April, Pendleton, *Prescott & Russell* (Robert A. Bracken, Christina Lewis, also found by Paul Mirsky, Beverly A. Scott).  
 2002 - one, basic, white morph, 29 April – 1 May, Aylmer, *Elgin* (David A. Martin, found by Ross C. Snider, Terry Ricker).  
 - two, basic, white morph, 13-15 November, Mississauga, *Peel* (Robert Curry, found by Robert Z. Dobos).  
 - one, basic, white morph, 14-25 November, Kingsville, *Essex* (Russ Jones, found by Dean J. Ware) – photo on file.

The two birds observed on 13-15 November 2002 were accompanied by two other birds that were considered to be hybrids between Ross's Goose and Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*).

**Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (26)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, male, 30 April – 7 May, Shirley's Bay, *Ottawa* (J. Burke Korol, found by Hervé Tremblay).

In addition to the Ottawa record, a bird thought to be a first alternate male hybrid between Tufted Duck and Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*) was observed and documented by Dean J. Ware, at Hillman Beach, *Essex*, on 27 December 2002, and at East Beach, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*, on 29 December 2002.

**Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* South Only (19)**

- 2003 - one, 10 and 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin).  
 - one, 8 October – 1 November, Long Point (Tip), *Norfolk* (Felix Weiss, Christian Friis, Rosalind Ford, also found by Genevieve Purugganan).

Wormington (2003b) noted that some had speculated that the Point Pelee bird may have been present in adjacent waters in Ohio and Michigan, periodically, from November 2002 until July 2003.

**Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* (32)**

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 6 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Cheryl Edgecombe, David R. Don, also found by Wolfgang Luft, Thomas A. Crooks, Rosalynn Price,



Frank Morley).

- one, definitive basic, 13 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Mark DeAbreu, also found by Sharon Antonopolous).
- one, first basic, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Frank Pinilla).
- one, first basic, 14 May, Grimsby, *Niagara* (George A. Meyers).

### **Swainson's Hawk** *Buteo swainsoni* (44)

- 2002 - one, basic, dark morph, 15 September, Toronto, *Toronto* (Jerry DeMarco, Glenn Coady, Jim Watt).
- 1984 - one, basic, light morph, 29 October, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, *Essex* (Michael A. Kielb, also found by Alfred J. Maley).

### **Purple Gallinule** *Porphyrola martinica* (12)

- 2003 - one, juvenal, 26-27 September, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, *Essex* (Robert C. Pettit) – photos on file.
- one, juvenal, 28 September, Shirley's Bay, *Ottawa* (John Walmsley, George Hollinworth) – photos on file.

The timing of these two occurrences suggests that these birds may have been directed northward by Hurricane Isabel, which passed through southern Ontario about a week earlier.

### **Piping Plover** *Charadrius melodus* (48)

- 2003 - one, 31 August – 4 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Ian M. Richards, Brett Groves, Vicki L. McKay, found by James Cole, Angie Cole) – photos on file.

This bird had no coloured or metal leg bands, so its source population cannot be determined (Wormington 2003c). Observers of Piping Plovers in Ontario should record band colours and combinations when possible, since this will assist in the determination of origin, and perhaps also in the management of this endangered species.

### **Willet** *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* North Only (14)

- 2003 - one, 7 June, Sable Island, *Rainy River* (Leo Heyens).

### **California Gull** *Larus californicus* (38)

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 1 January, Toronto, *Toronto* (Jean H. Iron, also found by Kevin A. McLaughlin) – photos on file.
- 2002 - one, third basic, 22 November – 31 December, Queenston, *Niagara* (Willie D'Anna, found by Jean H. Iron, Barbara Mann) – photos on file.
- one, definitive basic, 23 November – 1 December, Queenston, *Niagara* (Willie D'Anna, found by Jean H. Iron).
- one, second basic, 30 November, Niagara Falls, *Niagara* (Brandon R. Holden, Willie D'Anna, also found by Eric Holden).

### **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus* North Only (6)

- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 28 April – 5 May, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott, found by Brian Moore).

This is the first documented record of this species in northern Ontario in over 10 years, the last one being seen in Moosonee and Moose Factory, *Cochrane*, on 16-20 May 1992 (Bain 1994).

### **Ross's Gull** *Rhodostethia rosea* (9)

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 12 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, also found by Paul E. Turnquest, Beverley J. Rider, and Alfred H. Rider).

A brief account of this early fall record has been published elsewhere (Anonymous 2003c).

### **Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea* South Only After 1990 (8)

- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 1 June, Deschênes Rapids, Nepean, *Ottawa* (Robert A. Bracken, Christina Lewis, also found by Jan Slumkoski).
- two, definitive alternate, 1-2 June, Deschênes Rapids, Nepean, *Ottawa* (Robert A. Bracken, Christina Lewis, also found by Jan Slumkoski).

The Ottawa River is the only location in southern Ontario where this species is observed regularly, usually after cold fronts in late May and early June.

### **Sooty Tern** *Sterna fuscata* (5)

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 22 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (David J. Milsom, Robert J. Cermak, Lynne Dryden, Mick Dryden, Ross Mackintosh, Sandy Mackintosh).

This bird undoubtedly was associated with the passage of Hurricane Isabel. Three of the previously documented records were associated with Hurricane Fran, in September 1996, and the first record for the province was associated with Hurricane Connie in 1955 (Dobos 1997).

### **Band-tailed Pigeon** *Patagioenas fasciata* (10)

- 2003 - one, definitive basic, 26 September – 2 October, Westree, *Sudbury* (Charles J. Whitelaw, found by Al Brethour, Frances Brethour) – photos on file.

### **Eurasian Collared-Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* (6)

- 2003 - one, 5-24 May, Marysville, *Hastings* (Margaret J. Bain, Albert Boisvert, Christopher J. Escott, found by Bruce Ripley) – photos on file.
- one, 8 and 24 May 2003, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Alan Wormington).

The documentation for these two birds adequately eliminated the possibility of escaped Ringed Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia risoria*), or a hybrid between that species and Eurasian Collared-Dove. Dobos (1999) provided a summary of this identification problem, and some additional references to assist observers.

### **White-winged Dove** *Zenaida asiatica* (14)

- 2003 - one, basic, 15-17 May, Presqu'île Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (William D.



Gilmour, Christopher J. Escott) – photos on file.

- one, basic, 14-19 June, Kakabeka Falls, *Thunder Bay* (Brian Rusnick, Nicholas G. Escott, also found by Cec Girard) – photo on file.

### **Groove-billed Ani** *Crotophaga sulcirostris* (6)

1977 - one, 15 October, Goderich, *Huron* (Matt Oswald).

Convincing documentation was provided for this observation from 1977. James (1991) and Wormington and Curry (1990) list five other records for Ontario. These six records have occurred within a narrow window, between 9 October and 1 November.

### **Chuck-will's-widow** *Caprimulgus carolinensis* (15)

1989 - one, male, 28-29 May, Presqu'île Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (Ian M. Richards).

### **Rufous Hummingbird** *Selasphorus rufus* (15)

2003/04 - one, first prebasic molt, male, 21 November – 7 January, King Pitt, *Frontenac* (Phill Yendt, Carol M. Horner, Harold E. Stiver, William J. Crins, found by Mildred R. Yendt) – photos on file.

This bird was extremely cooperative, and the Yendt family was most generous in providing access to large numbers of observers. Excellent photographic documentation of this bird has been provided on the OFO website.

### **Red-bellied Woodpecker** *Melanerpes carolinus* North Only (12)

2003/04 - one, basic, male, mid November – late March, Atikokan, *Rainy River* (David H. Elder, found by Colin Young).

- 2003 - one, basic, male, 24 May – 1 June, Rainy River mouth, *Rainy River* (Chris Martin, also found by Gordon Martin).
- one, basic, male, 8 October, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.
- one, basic, female, 19 October, Rossport, *Thunder Bay* (Alan Wormington, also found by Mark W. Jennings).

### **Gray Flycatcher** *Empidonax wrightii* (3)

2003/04 - one, basic, 14 December – 7 January, near Cayuga, *Haldimand* (Jeffrey H. Skevington, Harold E. Stiver, Alan Wormington, Christopher J. Escott, Kenneth M. Newcombe, also found by Richard P. Skevington, John Harvey) – photos and video on file.

This bird, found on the Fisherville Christmas Bird Count, remained active and was observed by many birders until extremely cold weather arrived. The record is fully described by Skevington (2004). The two earlier records of this species are from the Toronto Islands, *Toronto*, on 11 September 1981 (Pittaway 1995), and from Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*, on 7 June 1993 (Bain 1994).

### **Gray Kingbird** *Tyrannus dominicensis* (7)

2003 - one, 26 July, Amherstview, *Lennox & Addington* (Owen Weir, also found by Teresa Weir).

### **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** *Tyrannus forficatus* (44)

2003 - one, juvenal/first basic, 5 October, Rondeau Bay Estates, *Chatham-Kent* (Blake A. Mann, Keith J. Burk) – photo on file.

### **Loggerhead Shrike** *Lanius ludovicianus* North Only (10)

2003 - one, alternate, 24 May, Big Fork, *Rainy River* (Chris Martin, also found by Gordon Martin).

### **Fish Crow** *Corvus ossifragus* (10)

- 2003 - one, basic, 12 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Glenn Coady, also found by Fred Bodsworth).
- one, 14 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (J. Burke Korol, Alan Wormington, also found by Jon “Sandy” Dobbyn).

### **Cave Swallow** *Petrochelidon fulva* (33)

- 2003 - one, 6-7 November, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* (J. Douglas Lockrey, also found by Karl Jennewein, Dan Kaczynski).
- three, 7 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, also found by Robert L. Waldhuber).
- two, 7 November, Long Point (Tip), *Norfolk* (Fergus Nicoll, Jane Hayden, Christian Friis) – photos on file.
- two, 8 November, Erieau, *Chatham-Kent* (Alan Wormington, found by Steve Charbonneau) – photos on file.
- one, 8 November, McGeachey's Pond, *Chatham-Kent* (Blake A. Mann).
- two, 8 November, north of Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).
- one, 26 November, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* (J. Douglas Lockrey, Ronald J. Pittaway, also found by Dan Kaczynski).

Following on last year's incursion of Cave Swallows, involving six documented individuals (Wormington 2002, Crins 2003), there was another small invasion in 2003, this time involving at least twenty-one birds, of which eleven were documented by reports submitted to the Committee (Wormington 2003d). Curry and McLaughlin (2000) provided a detailed account of the first major Ontario invasion, involving between 90 and 125 birds that occurred in November 1999. Clearly, early November is the time to look for this species along the lower Great Lakes. The individual at Cranberry Marsh on 26 November was observed being caught by a juvenal Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*).

### **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** *Poliptila caerulea* North Only (15)

2003 - one, 8 October, Marathon, *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott).

### **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe* (28)

- 2003 - one, male, 23 June, Point Petre, *Prince Edward* (Robert E. Maurer, Jr.).
- one, first basic, 10 October, Moose Factory, *Cochrane* (Alan Wormington, Mark W. Jennings) – photos on file.



**Townsend's Solitaire** *Myadestes townsendi* **South Only After 2000 (52)**

- 2003 - one, basic, 28 October – 17 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, Stephen T. Pike, Russ Jones) – photos on file.  
 - one, basic, 9 November, Pinery Provincial Park, *Lambton* (Blake A. Mann, also found by Lance Allin).

**Virginia's Warbler** *Vermivora virginiae* **(5)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, male, 14 May, Port Lambton, *Lambton* (Blake A. Mann).

**Hermit Warbler** *Dendroica occidentalis* **(7)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, female, 7 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Karl R. Konze, Nathan Garber, also found by Marianne B. Reid, Linda Bright, Camille Tremblay, Marcelle Lagace).  
 - one, alternate, female, 13 May, Cabot Head, *Bruce* (A. David Brewer, also found by Stephane Menu, Valerie Larochelle, Kevin Dance).

The bird at Point Pelee provided a particular identification challenge because of the complete lack of any black coloration on the throat, a plumage variant that is known but uncommon in this species (Anonymous 2003a).

**Kirtland's Warbler** *Dendroica kirtlandii* **(31)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, male, 15 May, Long Point (Courtright Ridge), *Norfolk* (Henri Robert, also found by Michael S. W. Bradstreet).  
 - one, alternate, male, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Emilia Rauckis, Barry S. Cheriére, Lois Knaggs, Donald Ford, also found by Marius Rauckis) – photos on file.

**Kentucky Warbler** *Oporornis formosus* **North Only (2)**

- 2003 - one, first alternate, male, 29 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.  
 - one, basic, male, 13 October, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock) – photo on file.

These two occurrences constitute the first records for Kentucky Warbler in northern Ontario. Both birds were captured, banded, and photographed at the Thunder Cape Bird Observatory, one during spring migration, and the other during fall migration.

**Spotted Towhee** *Pipilo maculatus* **(14)**

- 2002/03 - one, basic, male, 15 December – 6 April, Blair, *Waterloo* (Barry S. Cheriére, found by William G. Wilson) – photo on file.  
 1993 - one, basic, male, 24 January, MacLarens Landing, *Ottawa* (V. Bernard Ladouceur).

**Brewer's Sparrow** *Spizella breweri* **(1)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, male, 27 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (John M. Woodcock, Nicholas G. Escott, also found by Allan Hale) – photos on file.

This bird, captured, photographed and banded at the Thunder Cape Bird Observatory, is an addition to the documented avifauna of Ontario.

**Field Sparrow** *Spizella pusilla* **North Only (15)**

- 2003 - one, male, 20 July, Black Sturgeon Lake, *Thunder Bay* (David Grosshuesch).

**Lark Sparrow** *Chondestes grammacus* **(69)**

- 2003 - one, definitive alternate, 3 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Brett Groves, found by Karl R. Konze, Ian M. Richards) – photos on file.  
 - one, alternate, 8 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Sharon Pawlowski-Dankovic, David Dankovic).  
 - one, alternate, 12-13 May, Wiarton, *Grey* (Joseph W. Johnson).  
 - one, first alternate, 12-13 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Blake A. Mann, found by Alison J. Bentley, Stewart Bentley).

**Golden-crowned Sparrow** *Zonotrichia atricapilla* **(9)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, male, 19 May, Hurkett Cove Conservation Area, *Thunder Bay* (Susan Robinson, also found by George A. Williams).

In addition to being seen, this bird was also heard singing its diagnostic song.

**Black-headed Grosbeak** *Pheucticus melanocephalus* **(4)**

- 2003 - one, first basic, male, 18 November – 28 December, Cedar Hill, *Lanark* (J. Michael Tate, Andrew Keaveney, Terry Osborne, Harold E. Stiver, J. Burke Korol, Christopher J. Escott, found by Bob Jurmain) – photos on file.

This bird was seen by many observers during its six-week stay.

**Blue Grosbeak** *Guiraca caerulea* **(56)**

- 2003 - one, female, 12-19 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (J. Burke Korol, found by Donald Pye).

**Lazuli Bunting** *Passerina amoena* **(6)**

- 2003 - one, alternate, male, 21 May, Toronto, *Toronto* (Scott Clarke, also found by Lhot Alconera).

This bird was found while the observers were jogging and walking in E. T. Seton Park in Toronto. Despite not having optical equipment with them, a good description of the bird was provided that eliminated any doubt about its identity. Unfortunately, it did not remain in the area.

**Painted Bunting** *Passerina ciris* **(17)**

- 2003 - one, first alternate, male, 19 May, Long Point (Courtright Ridge), *Norfolk* (Kenny Burrell, also found by Henri Robert) – photos on file.  
 - one, definitive alternate, male, 22 – circa 26 May, Moose Factory, *Cochrane* (Donald Faries, found by Bertha Faries) – video on file.  
 - one, definitive alternate, male, 1 June, Vickers Heights, *Thunder Bay* (Gordon Milne) – photo on file.

The Moose Factory bird constitutes the most northerly record known from Ontario.

**Dickcissel** *Spiza americana* **North Only (13)**

- 2003 - one, basic, 13 October, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (Allan F. Gilbert).



### Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (3)

2003 - one, basic, 24 August, Leamington, *Essex* (Todd R. Pepper, found by Jeanette B. Pepper).

The two previous records of this species are of single birds in Eastnor Township, *Bruce*, on 16-18 February 1994 (Pittaway 1995), and Sturgeon Creek, *Essex*, on 20 May 1999 (Roy 2000). It has been suggested (Anonymous 2003b) that the individuals at Sturgeon Creek (1999) and Leamington (2003) could pertain to the same bird, especially since it is known that a Eurasian Tree Sparrow remained around St. Francois Xavier, Manitoba, for more than four years. The two *Essex* County locations are only about 8 km apart.

## Not Accepted Records

### Origin Uncertain

Records in this category are considered by the Committee to be correctly identified, but the origin of the bird(s) is suspect. Such birds may have escaped or may have been released from captivity. However, if new evidence suggesting wild origin becomes available, such records may be reconsidered by the Committee.

2003 - Monk Parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*), one, 19 April, Amherstburg, *Essex* (John B. Schmelefske, also found by Mike Jaber).

It is becoming increasingly difficult to dismiss reports of this species as involving escaped birds. There are breeding populations in the Chicago, Illinois and New York, New York areas. At some time in the future, if more reports are forthcoming, the status of this species in the province may need to be reconsidered.

- Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica*), one, 18 March, Guelph, *Wellington* (Stuart A. Mackenzie).

## Not Accepted Records

### Identification Uncertain

The documentation received for the following reports generally was found not to be detailed enough to eliminate similar species unequivocally. In a great many cases, the Committee members felt that the species being described probably was correctly identified, but that the details provided in the report, perhaps due to the circumstances of the observation conditions,

were insufficient. It should be noted that any of these reports may be re-submitted if additional documentation becomes available.

- 2003 - Storm-petrel species, one, 19 September, Port Bruce, *Elgin*.  
 - Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*), one, 2 June, Toronto, *Toronto*.  
 - Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), one, 20 September, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.  
 - Eurasian Collared-Dove, one, 13 May, Toronto, *Toronto* – photos on file.  
 - Eurasian Collared-Dove, one, 20 August, Port Hope, *Northumberland*.  
 - Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, one, 6 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.  
 - Fish Crow, one, 1 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.  
 - Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*), one, 18 October, west of Marentette Beach, *Essex*.  
 - Kirtland's Warbler, one, 5 June, Niagara-on-the-Lake, *Niagara*.  
 - Red-faced Warbler (*Caredellina rubrifrons*), one, 9 May, Bronte, *Halton*.  
 - Abert's Towhee (*Pipilo aberti*), one, 17 February, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay*.  
 2002 - Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*), one, 29 August, Alliston, *Simcoe*.

## Corrections/Updates to Previous OBRC Reports

### 2002 Report (Ontario Birds 21: 54-76)

- under Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, add "Ronald C. Ridout, Ian M. Richards" after "John Ferris, Julie Ferris".
- under Crested Caracara, change "*Caracara plancus*" to "*Caracara cheriway*".
- under Purple Gallinule, change "Elliot Lake" to "Blind River".
- under Piping Plover, 2001, Long Point, change "alternate" to "first alternate", change "10-15 June" to "24 May – 23 June", change "found by Ian Richards" to "found by Jerome Fischer et al.". A note can be added to indicate that this bird was banded as a chick at the mouth of the Platte River, Michigan, in the summer of 2000 (*vide* Jon McCracken).
- under Piping Plover, 2002, Port Colborne, change "9-12 October" to "9-18 October".
- under Lewis's Woodpecker, change "18 January – 7 March" to "5 January – 5 May".
- under Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, 2002, Caledon East, change "Nathan Miller" to "Nathan Hiller".

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