

# *Articles*

## **Ontario Bird Records Committee Report for 1999**

Kayo J. Roy

### **Introduction**

This is the 18th Annual Report of the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC). It covers the activities of the OBRC during 1999 when the Committee received and reviewed 156 records of species on the provincial Review List. Of this total, 74% of the submissions were accepted, and five records that required additional data or a more detailed review were referred to the 2000 Committee. The reports were sent in by a wide range of birders, both expert and novice, who for the most part submitted well written and thorough accounts, often including field notes and sketches. Photographs or video tapes were also included with a substantial number of submitted reports.

The members of the 1999 Committee were: Margaret Bain, Robert Curry (Chair), Robert Dobos, Kevin McLaughlin, Doug McRae, Ron Pittaway, Kayo Roy (non-voting Secretary), and Ron Tozer. Ross James served as Museum Liaison (non-voting) to the OBRC in 1999. Mark Peck assumes the duties of Museum Liaison for 2000.

The official Ontario Bird

Checklist increased by one species this year with the addition of Heermann's Gull, raising the provincial total to 473. Incredibly, this bird was found along the Toronto waterfront where it still remains as this report is being published. Another exceptional observation was a Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch at Long Point Tip, the first documented for southern Ontario. No new breeding species for the province were added in 1999.

All the records received by the OBRC are archived at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto. Researchers and other interested individuals are welcome to examine any of the filed reports at the ROM, by appointment only. Please write Mark Peck, Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Biology, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C6, E-mail: markp@rom.on.ca, or telephone 416-586-5523.

### **Listing of Records**

The format of this report follows that used in last year's annual report (Dobos 1999). Accepted records are listed by their English and scientific

names following the Seventh Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list (AOU 1998). Following the species 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 date of the OBRC); and the second is the total number of accepted records from 1982 to 1999 (including those listed in this report). An asterisk in place of the first number indicates that documentation was not required for the occurrence of that 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 as approved at the 11 September 1999 OBRC Policy Meeting. See Pittaway (2000) for a detailed explanation of plumage and molt terminology. The names of all contributors of documentation are listed. Those contributors who were known to be the finders of the bird are underlined. Others present when the bird was found, but who did not submit a report, are listed when known.

The Committee makes every effort to verify documented information prior to accepting and publishing a record. It is, however, still possible that some inaccuracies occur. We would clearly welcome a written communication to the Secretary from anyone with any 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. We have used the most accurate information that was available to us.

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 Chair 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" report can be reconsidered by the OBRC if new evidence is submitted to the Committee for review.

### **Changes to the Review List**

At the OBRC Annual Meeting in March 2000, the Committee removed American Avocet from the southern Ontario Review List. The criterion used for delisting was 25 or more published records in southern Ontario during a five year period. American Avocet remains on the Review List for northern Ontario.

### **Acknowledgements**

The OBRC would like to extend their appreciation to the many observers who took the time to submit documentation, photographs, sketches, and videos of their observations of rare birds in 1999. We are thankful to the following people who assisted in many ways to provide the Committee with additional

data, photographs, videos and other material evidence: Bob Andrle, Sam Barone, Al Boisvert, Allen Chartier, Barry Cheriére, Bob Curry, Willie D'Anna, Bruce Di Labio, Dave Elder, Chris Escott, Nick Escott, Dave Fidler, Jim Flynn, Michel Gosselin, Tom Hince, Phill Holder, Jean Iron, Ed Johns, Paul Lehman, Jon McCracken, Martin McNicholl, Mike Morgante, Karl Overman, Mark Peck, Alf Rider, Ron Ridout, Roy Smith, Michael Tate, Ron Weir, Jul Wojnowski, Alan Wormington and Wilf Yusek.

I wish to extend a very sincere thank you to Mike Street for allowing me full access to ONTBIRDS

(the listserv sponsored by the Ontario Field Ornithologists) on matters dealing with the OBRC. This forum for channelling data, especially dates and places, has been invaluable in maintaining accurate records, and many rare bird reports were submitted to the OBRC because of direct appeals through ONTBIRDS.

To the 1999 OBRC members, I thank you for your assistance and cooperation. Your confidence and support are very much appreciated. I am grateful to Rob Dobos, the previous Secretary, for his very considerable assistance as I assumed the duties of Secretary.



Figure 1: First basic Ross's Gull at Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*, on 17-18 May 1999. Photo by *Alan Wormington*.



Figure 2: Juvenile Piping Plover at Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, from 12 to 16 September 1999. Photo by *Wilf Yusek*.



Figure 3: Basic Lewis's Woodpecker at Hallecks, *Leeds and Grenville*, from 1 to 7 October 1999. Photo by *Albert Boisvert*.



Figure 4: Juvenal Cave Swallow captured and banded at Long Point Tip on 4 November 1999. Photo by *Christine Jamieson*.



Figure 5: First alternate Kirtland's Warbler at Forest, *Lambton*, on 9-10 June 1999. Photo by *Alfred H. Rider*.



Figure 6: First alternate male Bullock's Oriole at Willowdale, *Toronto*, from 1 to 18 April 1980. Photo by *Donald R. Gunn*.



Figure 7: First basic male Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, captured and banded, at Long Point Tip, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, from 8 to 10 July 1999. Photo by *Leo Deloyde*.

## Accepted Records

### Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis* (0/13)

- 1999 - one, alternate, 20 June, Lake-of-the-Woods (Windy Bay), *Rainy River* (David H. Elder, also found by Karen Mikolieu).  
 - one, basic, 27 November, Niagara-on-the-Lake (McFarlane Point), *Niagara* (Donald Ford, also found by John Sparling, Eric Braaten).

### Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* (2/20)

- 1998 - two, juvenal, 14 November - 29 December, Van Wagners Beach, *Hamilton-Wentworth*, and Hamilton/Burlington Beachstrip, *Hamilton-Wentworth/Halton* (one bird 14-18 November and 3-29 December, two birds 28 November - 1 December), Toronto (Sunnyside Beach), *Toronto* (one bird 17 November), and Niagara-on-the-Lake, *Niagara* (one bird 27 December) (Mark Chojnacki, Linda J. Nuttall, Robert K. Yukich, Barry Cherriere, Robert Z. Dobos) - photo on file.

The pattern continues as the majority of gannets found on the Great Lakes are juvenal birds, consistently appearing in late fall or early winter (Wormington 1985).

### Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (1/6)

- 1999 - one, definitive basic, 10-11 January, Port Credit Harbour, *Peel* (Donald E. Perks, Ann White, also found by John Lamey, Jerry H. Guild).  
 - one, definitive alternate, 25 April, Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, *Prince Edward* (Ronald D. Weir).

### Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* (7/34)

- 1999 - one, juvenal, 14-16 August, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, *Essex* (Paul D. Pratt, Ann White, also found by Elaine Sinnott).  
 - one, definitive basic, 17 August, Mississauga, *Peel* (Nicholle Smith).  
 - one, juvenal, 7 November, Port Rowan, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Norman C. Murr, Stanley J. Bajurny).  
 1998 - one, juvenal, 9 August, Ottawa, *Ottawa-Carleton* (Michael Tate, found by Gordon McLean).

### Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* (2/22)

- 1999 - one, definitive alternate, 18 May, Sault Ste. Marie, *Algoma* (Robert J.C. Elliott, also found by Mary Elliott).  
 - one, definitive alternate, 30-31 May, Presqu'île Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (Martha Robinson, also found by William Gilmore, Margaret Tourney).

### Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* (5/26)

- 1999 - one, first alternate, 13-24 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Blake A. Mann, Sandra Eadie, Mark Chojnacki) - photos and video on file.  
 - one, definitive alternate, 25 May, Ottawa (Mud Lake), *Ottawa-Carleton* (Jean-Pierre Cheff).

The Ottawa bird is only the second accepted record for the area. The first also was a definitive alternate, at Rockcliffe Park in April of 1970 (Wormington 1986).

**White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* (0/2)**

1998 - one, 27 June, Pelee Island (Scudder), *Essex* (Ethan J. Meleg, also found by David Hodare).

This observation of the bird in flight directly over the marina at Pelee Island is only the second accepted record for Ontario. The first was at Turkey Point Marsh, *Haldimand-Norfolk*, on 12-14 and 29-30 October 1991 (Bain 1992). Three other records for Ontario listed by James (1991) have not yet been considered by the OBRC.

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (2/28)**

1999 - two, first basic, 10 October, Kohler, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Gerald Chapple, Kenny Burrell, Robert Curry, also found by Nina Chapple).

**Ibis species *Plegadis* sp. (3/28)**

1999 - one, 12 September, Presqu'île Provincial Park, *Northumberland* (Richard Pathak).  
 - one, 28 November, Long Point (Causeway), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Mark Chojnacki, also found by Linda J. Nuttall) - video on file.

**Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* (2/23)**

1999 - one, 25 April and 2 May, Kendal (Ganaraska Forest Centre), *Durham* (25 April), and Wesleyville, *Northumberland* (2 May) (Rayfield Pye, Margaret J.C. Bain, also found by Ralph Page).  
 - one, 28-29 April, Point Pelee National Park and Sturgeon Creek (29 April), *Essex* (Alan Wormington, also found by Henrietta T. O'Neill) - photos on file.  
 - two, basic, 20-21 May, Long Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Barry D. Jones, John L. Olmsted, Jul K. Wojnowski).  
 - one, 3 November, Ancaster (Dundas Valley Conservation Area), *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Bruce W. Duncan, also found by Anthony Horvat).  
 1998 - one, 9-11 November, Caledonia, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Robert Z. Dobos, found by James Cram, Margaret Cram).

1999 was a banner year for this species, with four accepted records.

**Ross's Goose *Chen rossii* South Only (0/25)**

1999 - one, first basic, white morph, 16 February - 14 March, Dundas, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (16 February), Oakville, *Halton* (20 February), Bronte Harbour, *Halton* (28 February), and Mississauga, *Peel* (10-14 March) (Gavin Edmonstone, Barry Cheriére, found by Roy Hough) - photo on file.  
 - one, white morph, 27 February, La Salle, *Essex* (David Boyce).  
 - one, white morph, 2-7 April, Townsend (Sewage Lagoon), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Barry D. Jones, Norman C. Murr).  
 - one, definitive basic, white morph, 30 October, Winchester (Sewage Lagoon), *Stormont Dundas & Glengarry* (Robert A. Bracken, Christina Lewis, also found by Colin Rogers).  
 - one, definitive basic, white morph, 5 November - 3 December, Toronto (Humber Bay Park East), *Toronto* (Craig S.A. McLauchlar, Roy B.H. Smith, William J. Crins, Kayo J. Roy, found by Leon Schlichter) - photos on file.

From 1991 to 1998, there were 20 accepted records in Ontario (Dobos 1999). The five records above indicate that this species continues to increase in southern Ontario.



### **Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (1/23)**

- 1999 - one, definitive alternate, 17-27 January, Fort Erie, *Niagara* (Michael M. Morgante, Kayo J. Roy, also found by Donald Mills, Rick Young).

### **Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* South Only (2/13)**

- 1999 - one, first basic, female, 1-24 December, Stoney Creek, *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Curry, also found by John L. Olmsted).

### **Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus* North Only (0/16)**

- 1998 - two, females, 8-9 November, Thunder Bay (Bare Point), *Thunder Bay* (Nicholas G. Escott) - photos on file.

### **Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* (5/18)**

- 1999 - one, first basic, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).  
 - one, definitive basic, 19 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).  
 - one, first basic, 5 June, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).  
 - one, first basic, 13 June, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).

The 13 June record is the latest accepted date for Ontario.

### **Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni* (8/34)**

- 1999 - one, juvenal, 3 October, Whitby (Cranberry Marsh), *Durham* (Michael Boudreau, David Gascoigne, also found by Colleen Boudreau, Martin Bence, David Shannon).  
 - one, juvenal, 6 October, Seacliff, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, Kevin A. McLaughlin).  
 - one, definitive basic, 6 October, Seacliff, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Alan Wormington).  
 - one, juvenal, 6 October, Seacliff, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, Kevin A. McLaughlin).  
 - one, definitive basic, dark morph, 11 October, Port Stanley (Hawk Cliff), *Elgin* (Barry Cherriere, also found by Thomas Bolohan, David Brown, Su Ross).  
 1998 - one, 22 October, Seacliff, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).  
 1997 - one, juvenal, light morph, (banded), 17 October, Malden Centre (Holiday Beach Conservation Area), *Essex* (Robert Pettit, banded by John St. Louis) - photos on file.  
 1996 - one, juvenal, male, (banded), 13 September, Malden Centre (Holiday Beach Conservation Area), *Essex* (Robert Pettit, banded by Martin Wernaart) - photo on file.

Here is another species whose occurrence appears to be increasing, with five accepted records in 1999. The 1996 and 1997 records (Carpenter et al. 1999) represent the only banded records of this species for the province. It is interesting to note that of the 34 accepted records since the formation of the OBRC in 1982, 63% were September or October sightings.

### **Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* North Only (0/2)**

- 1998 - one, definitive alternate, 26 May, Hilliardton, *Timiskaming* (Barry Kinch, also found by Bruce Murphy).

This is the second accepted record of this species for northern Ontario. The first was in September of 1990 when four birds, likely a family group, were observed in Hearst, *Cochrane* (Curry 1991).

### **Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* South Only (1/38)**

1999 - one, juvenal, 12-16 September, Hamilton (Van Wagners Beach and Hamilton Beachstrip), *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Gerald Guenther, Vince Giuliani, Wilfred Yusek, Sam Barone) - photos on file.

This bird had two colour bands on the right leg, yellow over red. It had been banded at Michigan's Whitefish Point (Bain and Shanahan 1999b).

### **American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* (7/58)**

1999 - five, (three male, two female), 18 May, Bronte Harbour, *Halton* (John L. Olmsted, also found by Richard G. Snider).

- one, basic, male, 20-25 August, Aylmer Wildlife Management Area, *Elgin* (David A. Martin).

- one, basic, male, 29 August - 26 September, Ajax (Corner Marsh), *Durham* (David Worthington, William J. Crins).

1998 - one, basic, female, 13-17 November, Hamilton Harbour (Windermere Basin), *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Robert Z. Dobos, found by Robert Henry).

- two, basic (one male, one female), 26 November - 6 December, Hamilton Harbour (Windermere Basin), *Hamilton-Wentworth* (Barry Cheriére, Alan Wormington) - photos on file.

Documentation for sightings of this species in southern Ontario is not required after 31 December 1999. The species remains on the Review List for northern Ontario.

### **Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* (0/19)**

1999 - one, first basic/first alternate, 6 June, Amherstview (Sewage Lagoon), *Lennox & Addington* (Ronald D. Weir, Paul Mackenzie, found by Kenneth F. Edwards) - photo on file.

A rare Ontario occurrence in June. The species breeds on the Arctic tundra of northern Siberia and winters widely in Africa, southern Asia and Australia (Paulson 1993).

### **Heermann's Gull *Larus heermanni* (0/1)**

1999/00 - one, first basic/first alternate, 14 November 1999 - August 2000 (at least), Toronto Harbour, *Toronto*, (14 November - August at least, not present continuously), Hamilton Harbour (LaSalle Park), *Hamilton-Wentworth/Halton* (23 February and 6 March), Etobicoke (Humber Bay Park), *Toronto* (25-30 March), and Bronte Harbour, *Halton* (16 April) (Bruce E. Massey, Robert K. Yukich, Craig S.A. McLauchlan, Roy B.H. Smith, Raymond Geras, Edmund D. Johns, Kayo J. Roy, Linda J. Nuttall, Mark Chojnacki, Christopher J. Escott) - video and photos on file.

This remarkable first record for Ontario is also the second and most easterly record for North America. The first record was that of a bird observed in Michigan and Ohio from August 1979 to November 1981. These dates, as well as the full details of this Ontario sighting, were fully described by Yukich (2000). The bird is still being observed in the Toronto Harbour area as this report is being published.

**Mew Gull *Larus canus* (3/13)**

- 1999 - one, definitive basic, 26 January, Cobourg Harbour, *Northumberland* (Roger Frost).

**California Gull *Larus californicus* (0/26)**

- 1999/00 - one, definitive basic, 7 November 1999 - 3 January 2000, Queenston, *Niagara* (Drew J. Campbell, Gordon Bellerby, found by Willie D'Anna).  
 - one, definitive basic, 21 November 1999 - 16 January 2000, Niagara Falls, *Niagara* (Willie D'Anna, Kayo J. Roy, Christopher J. Escott, also found by Betsy Potter, Dean DiTommaso, Sharon Skelly) - video on file.  
 - one, third basic, 26 December 1999 - 6 January 2000, Queenston, *Niagara* (Willie D'Anna, Marcya Foster, also found by Donald Powers, Michael Powers).  
 1999 - one, definitive basic, 19 December, St. Catharines (Municipal Beach, Port Weller), *Niagara* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Robert Z. Dobos, also found by George M. Naylor, Robert Waldhuber).  
 1998 - one, definitive basic, 6-19 December, Niagara Falls (Chippawa), *Niagara* (Betsy Potter, Michael M. Morgante, Jean Iron, Winnie Yung, also found by Willie D'Anna, William Lee, Walton Sabin).

This species has become an annual vagrant to the Niagara River area during late fall and early winter (Dobos 1998). It is probable that some are returning from visits in previous years. Some observers have indicated seeing a difference in mantle colour among the adult California Gulls along the river. Jehl (1987) described a smaller, darker-mantled race (*L. c. californicus*) and a larger, lighter-mantled race (*L. c. albertainensis*). Most birds seen in Ontario match *albertainensis* in size and mantle shade. Birders should pay special attention to the mantle colour of adult California Gulls observed in the province.

**Slaty-backed Gull *Larus schistisagus* (0/2)**

- 1999 - one, definitive basic, 2-9 January, Toronto (Sunnyside Beach), *Toronto* (Robert K. Yukich, Juha Varrela, Glenn Coady) - photos on file.

Well documented reports with diagnostic photographs clearly confirm this identification of the bird observed. This is the second record for the province, the first being a definitive basic in Niagara Falls, *Niagara*, from 24 November to 29 December 1992 (Bain 1993). Readers are directed elsewhere in this issue for details of this observation (Yukich and Varella 2000).

**Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea* (0/7)**

- 1999 - one, first basic, 17-18 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Phil Bristow, Alan Wormington, Craig S.A. McLaughlan, also found by M.C. Powell, J.P. Martin, R.M. Andrews, L. Cook).

**Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus* (2/3)**

- 1999 - one, basic, 14 December, Burlington, *Halton* (Robert Curry).  
 1998 - one, basic, 14 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Alan Wormington).

**Chuck-will's-widow *Caprimulgus carolinensis* (\*/9)**

- 1999 - one, female, 14 May, Rondeau Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent* (Blake A. Mann).

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

1999 - one, male 7 May, Sault Ste. Marie, *Algoma* (Robert Knudsen, also found by Joanne Knudsen).

This is the first accepted spring record for Ontario.

**Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis* (1/2)**

1999 - one, basic, 1-7 October, Hallecks, *Leeds and Grenville* (Bruce Di Labio, Michael Tate, Florence Jerome, Edmund D. Johns, Albert Boisvert, found by Valerie Woodhall, Les Woodhall) - photos on file.

This amazing find is the third accepted record for Ontario. The last southern Ontario report was the Point Pelee and Windsor observations, 29 years ago in the winter of 1972/73 (Dobos 1996), which were considered by the Committee to pertain to the same individual. The bird reported at Langtry's Bridge (near Emo), *Rainy River*, on 27 May 1934, and observed by Edgar Sullivan (Snyder 1938) is considered a valid record, but since no description exists, the observation cannot be reviewed by the OBRC. The only other report pertains to a bird photographed in May 1995 in Englehart (Dobos 1996).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus* North Only (0/7)**

1999 - one, basic, male, 30 January - 7 March, Thunder Bay, *Thunder Bay* (David H. Elder, also found by Mary C. Elder).

1998/99 - one, basic, male, 15 November 1998 - mid-June 1999, Arrow Lake, *Thunder Bay* (Frank Stewart, Nicholas G. Escott) - photo on file.

**Ash-throated/Nutting's Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens/nuttingi* (0/1)**

1999 - one, 24 November, Port Stanley (Hawk Cliff), *Elgin* (Glenn Barrett, also found by Pam Martin, Robert Hubert, Gary Hubert).

Although there are five previously accepted records of Ash-throated Flycatcher by the OBRC, this is the first time the Committee has assigned a reported Ash-throated to this species group. The two species are very similar in appearance, and likely only safely separated in the field by voice (Chris Benesh, pers. comm.). Since this bird at Port Stanley was not heard to vocalize, the Committee chose not to assign the bird to either species. The Committee recognizes the precedent this may create for reports of *Myiarchus* flycatchers in Ontario, and recommend that future documentation must convincingly eliminate one or the other of these two species. Identification criteria of Nutting's Flycatcher are referenced to Howell and Webb (1995), Kaufman (1998), and National Geographic Society (1999).

**Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* North Only (0/7)**

1997 - one, alternate, 21 May, Pass Lake, *Thunder Bay* (Annette van Niejenhuis, also found by Brian Moore) - photos on file.

### **Fish Crow *Corvus ossifragus* (1/5)**

1999 - two, basic, 19-24 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Robert Z. Dobos, Alan Wormington, Craig S.A. McLaughlan).

This is the sixth accepted record for Ontario, all spring sightings from Point Pelee National Park. It was reported that these two birds may have been a territorial pair, and that one bird may have lingered to at least 27 June (Bain and Shanahan 1999a). However, no documentation has been received by the OBRC for these later observations.

### **Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* (0/20)**

- 1999 - five to ten, 2 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin).
- twenty-eight, 3 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin).
- two (one juvenal, *pallida*, deceased), 3-4 November, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (James N. Flynn, Barry Cheriére, found by G. Thomas Hince, specimen collected by Robert Curry) - photos on file, specimen (skin) at ROM (#66156).
- three, 3 November, Erie Beach, *Chatham-Kent* (E. James Burk).
- four, (one juvenal, *pallida*, banded), 3-4 November, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Ian Richards, Christine Jamieson) - photos on file.
- nine (different birds than above), 4 November, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Ian Richards, Christine Jamieson).
- six, 4-6 November, Erieau, *Chatham-Kent* (Steve Charbonneau, Blake A. Mann) - photos on file.
- eight, 5 November, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Ian Richards, Christine Jamieson).
- sixteen, 5 November, Long Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Gordon Bellerby, Donald Graham, Kayo J. Roy, Maggie Smiley).
- three, 5 November, Turkey Point, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Gerald Guenther).
- one, 5 November, Port Burwell, *Elgin* (David A. Martin, also found by Linda Wladarski).
- two, 5 November, Point Pelee National Park (Tip), *Essex* (Kevin A. McLaughlin, Michael Tate).
- two, 5 November, Point Pelee National Park (Sanctuary Pond), *Essex* (Michael Tate).
- one, 6 November, Highland Glen, *Lambton* (Karl Overman, also found by James Lesser, Randy Horvath, Georgia Reid) - photo on file.

An unprecedented number of Cave Swallows descended on Ontario along the north shore of Lake Erie between 2 and 11 November 1999. It is believed that between 90 and 125 individuals might have been involved in this phenomenal event in Ontario, and at least another 80 elsewhere in eastern North America (Curry and McLaughlin 2000). Although only two of the birds were determined to be of the southwestern subspecies *pallida*, it is very likely that all of the others were also *pallida* (Curry and McLaughlin 2000). A complex series of weather related factors may have caused the displacement of these birds from Texas to Ontario and eastern North America (Curry and McLaughlin 2000). The OBRC is still awaiting documentation for the following Cave Swallow reports: two birds, 3 November, at Sturgeon Creek, *Essex*; 25 birds, 4 November, at Long Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk*; one bird, 10 November, at Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk*; and one bird, 11 November, at Long Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk*.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila caerulea* North Only (2/11)**

1999 - one, 25-26 May, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Audrey Heagy, also found by Jeremy Bryan, Fiona Walker, Marya Miller).

**Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* (7/17)**

1995 - one, first basic, female, 21-22 September, Sydenham, *Frontenac* (Kit Chubb) - specimen (skin) at ROM (#31104).

This record came to light in a letter written to *Ontario Insects* (Chubb 1996) about a bird feeding on insects on a residential lawn in Sydenham. One of the insects the bird ate, an earwig (Dermaptera), buried its claspers at the back of the bird's tongue, one on each side of the glottis, suffocating the bird instantly.

**Mountain Bluebird *Sialia curruoides* (3/24)**

1999/00 - one, basic, male, 25 November 1999 - 1 April 2000, Fisher's Glen, *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Norman C. Murr, Stanley J. Bajurny, found by Sandra Maxwell).

1999 - one, basic, male, 25 April - 20 June, Rainy River, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms, David H. Elder).

- one, basic, female, 19 December, Wiarton, *Bruce* (Ethan J. Meleg, also found by Joseph W. Johnson).

The Rainy River bird was paired with a female Eastern Bluebird (*S. sialis*) indicating that hybrid breeding may have occurred.

**Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi* (4/31)**

1999 - one, basic, 7-9 November, Pinery Provincial Park, *Lambton* (David A. Martin, also found by Linda Wladarski).

1998 - one, basic, 12-13 October, Caledon East, *Peel* (Simon Linington).

- one, basic, 19 October, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Wendy Jess).

- four, 11-13 December, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Jody Allair, also found by Jessie Antoniak, Tricia Newport, Karl Reimer).

1997/98 - one, basic, 24 December 1997 - 1 February 1998, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Ethan J. Meleg, found by Brian D. Rennie) - photos on file.

The four birds together at Thunder Cape is almost certainly the largest group ever seen in eastern North America.

**Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus* (3/6)**

1998 - one, basic, 17 May, Pelee Island (Stone Road Alvar), *Essex* (John Hampshire, James E. McAllister).

**Sprague's Pipit *Anthus spragueii* (0/3)**

1998 - one, basic, male, 6-19 July, Rainy River, *Rainy River* (Roger M. Simms, Robert Curry, found by John Lamey).

This is the third accepted record for Ontario, all from the north. An additional record at Rainy River from 3 to 12 July 1980 (James 1991) has yet to be reviewed by the OBRC.

**Kirtland's Warbler *Dendroica kirtlandii* (7/16)**

1999 - one, first alternate, male, 9-10 June, Forest, *Lambton* (Alfred H. Rider, found by Cynthia Cook) - photos on file.

### **Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* (2/15)**

1999/00 - one, basic, female, 18 December 1999 - 12 January 2000, Oakville (Shell Park), *Halton* (Gavin Edmonstone, Mark Cranford, Dan Olech) - photos on file.

### **Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* (2/10)**

1999/00 - one, first basic, male, *arcticus/montanus*, 1 December 1999 - 19 January 2000, Whitby (Lynde Shores Conservation Area), *Durham* (Brian Henshaw, Christopher J. Escott, Frank Pinilla, also found by Ronald Huizer, David Shirley) - photos and video on file.

1979/80 - one, first basic, male, mid-November 1979 - 22 March 1980, Kenora, *Kenora* (M. Warnick) - photo on file.

The Kenora record surfaced in a letter written by Ken Gardner to W. Earl Godfrey on 29 May 1980 describing the details of this observation, and enclosing a photograph of the bird. The OBRC obtained copies from the Canadian Museum of Nature to document this sighting.

### **Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* (6/44)**

1998 - one, alternate, 8 May, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Christine Jamieson).

1974 - one, 20-22 April, Hornepayne, *Cochrane* (John B. Miles) - photo on file.

### **Henslow's Sparrow *Ammodramus henslowii* (\*15)**

1999 - two, alternate, 14-15 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Craig S.A. McLaughlan, also found by Norman C. Murr, Stanley J. Bajurny).

- one, alternate, 18 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Ian Moore, also found by Steven Huggins, David Barnes).

- one, alternate, male, 9-11 June, Gloucester, *Ottawa-Carleton* (Michael Tate, found by Paul Bisson).

1997 - one, alternate, 5 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (John Reaume, also found by Scott Fairbairn) - photo on file.

### **Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus* (1/2)**

1998 - one, definitive alternate, male, 14-18 April, South Purgatory Point, *Bruce* (Terry Julian) - photo on file.

This third accepted record for Ontario has an interesting story behind it. The young finder had described a bird he saw, sketched and photographed to a local tour leader and asked, what were the chances that he had observed a Black-headed Grosbeak at his backyard feeder. The leader replied that his chances were little to none. The finder promised to send him his sketch and photo, and when they were received, the red-faced leader sent an apology to the finder for his snap judgment, and sent the documentation to the OBRC.

### **Blue Grosbeak *Guiraca caerulea* (8/38)**

1999 - one, definitive alternate, male, 10 May, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex* (Alan Wormington, James N. Flynn, found by Carolyn J. Keefe) - photos on file.

- one, definitive alternate, male, 10 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex* (Vicki McKay).

- one, female, 19 May, St. Williams (Backus Woods), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Jul K. Wojnowski, found by Rohan van Twest).

1981 - one, first alternate, male, 4-8 May, Etobicoke, *Toronto* (Joyce Given) - photos on file.

**Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena* (1/3)**

1979 - one, first alternate, male, 10-mid May, Pickle Lake, *Kenora* (Donald Koval, also found by Irvine M. Gardner, Marilyn Koval) - photo on file.

This observation, the first of four Ontario records, is an old record listed in James (1991). Details and photographs of this sighting were contained in a letter dated 29 May 1980 to W. Earl Godfrey. The OBRC was able to obtain copies of this documentation from the Canadian Museum of Nature.

**Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* (2/8)**

1999 - one, definitive alternate, male, 6-11 May, Kenora, *Kenora* (Gerry Crandall).

**Dickcissel *Spiza americana* North Only (1/11)**

1999 - one, alternate, male, 28 May, New Liskeard, *Timiskaming* (Elsie Vokes, James Vokes) - photos on file.

- one, first basic, male, 19 September, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (David Okines, also found by Audrey Heagy).

- one, basic, female, 2 October, Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* (Charles M. Francis).

**Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii* (3/2)**

1980 - one, first alternate, male, 1-18 April, Willowdale, *Toronto* (Robert Curry, Donald R. Gunn, found by M.A. Biro) - photos on file.

**Great-tailed/Boat-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus/major* (0/1)**

1999 - one, basic, female, 29 August, Honey Harbour (Burnt Island), *Muskoka* (Richard G. Miller).

This is the first reported Great-tailed Grackle record which the Committee has placed into this species grouping. There are two previous accepted records of Great-tailed Grackle, but none of Boat-tailed Grackle. The Committee chose not to assign this report to either species since it did not adequately separate the two species, such as no details of vocalization.

**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch *Leucosticte tephrocotis* (1/7)**

1999 - one, first basic, male, *littoralis* group, 8-10 July, Long Point (Tip), *Haldimand-Norfolk* (Michael Bradstreet, Jane Bowles, Leo Deloyde) - photos on file.

This remarkable record, the first documented for southern Ontario, involved a bird that was banded and photographed by the Long Point Bird Observatory.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (0/2)**

1999 - one, basic, 20 May, Sturgeon Creek, *Essex* (Paul D. Pratt).

A second record for Ontario of this bird whose range is expanding in North America (Lang 1992).



## Not Accepted Records

### Identification Uncertain

The documentation submitted for the following reports was for the most part found to be inadequate to unequivocally identify the species claimed. Any of these reports may be re-submitted, should additional documentation become available.

- 1999
- Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*), one, 17 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Little Blue Heron, one, 4 May, Staples, *Essex*.
  - Little Blue Heron, one, 8 May, Toronto (Leslie Street Spit), *Toronto*.
  - Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, one, 23 May, Wheatley Harbour, *Essex*.
  - Black Vulture, two, 29 April, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Black Vulture, one, 23 July, Trafalgar, *Halton*.
  - Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*), one, 12 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*), one, 3 May, Rock Chapel, *Hamilton-Wentworth*.
  - Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*), one, 13 March, Amherst Island (Stella), *Lennox and Addington*.
  - Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), one, 29 August, Thedford, *Lambton*.
  - Northern "Red-shafted" Flicker (*Colaptes auratus cafer*), one, 30 January, Toronto (Lambton Woods), *Toronto*.
  - Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), 5 May, Comber (Big "O" Woods Conservation Area), *Essex*.
  - Northern Wheatear, one, 8 and 12 January, Sharbot Lake, *Frontenac*.
  - Sprague's Pipit, one, 22 and 25 September, Windsor, *Essex*.
  - Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*), one, 12 May, Prince Edward Point, *Prince Edward*.
  - Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*), one, 12 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*), one, 10 May, Wheatley Provincial Park, *Chatham-Kent*.
  - Western Tanager, one 18 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Spotted Towhee, one, 12 July, Kingston (Lemoine Point), *Frontenac*.
  - Lark Sparrow, one, 15 October, Rock Chapel, *Hamilton-Wentworth*.
  - Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*), one, 10 October, Cobourg, *Northumberland*.
  - Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*), one, 17 March, Melancthon, *Dufferin*.
  - Black-headed Grosbeak, one, 14 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Black-headed Grosbeak, one, 15 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Blue Grosbeak, one, 12 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
  - Blue Grosbeak, one, 13 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.
- 1998
- Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*), ten, 12 October, Iron Bridge, *Algoma*.
  - Bewick's Wren, (*Thryomanes bewickii*), one, 19 September, Windsor, *Essex*.
  - "Pink-sided" Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis mearnsi*), one, 5 December, Windsor, *Essex*.
- 1997
- Black-headed Grosbeak, one, 10-mid May, Sheshegwaning, *Manitoulin* - photos on file.
  - Bewick's Wren, one, 21 May, Point Pelee National Park, *Essex*.

The above record was originally reviewed and accepted by the 1997 Committee (Dobos 1998). Upon review of new information concerning the observation, the 1999 Committee determined that the documentation submitted did not conclusively support the identification stated in the report.

- Henslow's Sparrow, one, 4 May, Kirkfield (Carden Alvar), *Victoria*.
- Bullock's Oriole, one, 16 August, Toronto (Leslie Street Spit), *Toronto*.
- 1995 - Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, one, 21 September, Hamilton (Van Wagners Beach), *Hamilton-Wentworth*.
- 1994 - Henslow's Sparrow, one, 22 May, Raglan (Purple Woods Conservation Area), *Durham*.
- 1993 - Henslow's Sparrow, one, 9 June, Haltonville, *Halton*.
- 1984 - Bewick's Wren, one, 28 April, Long Point Provincial Park, *Haldimand-Norfolk*.
- 1981 - Bullock's Oriole, one, 31 October, Peterborough, *Peterborough*.

The above record was originally reviewed and accepted by the 1996 Committee (Dobos 1997). In light of new information related to identification criteria (Lee and Birch 1998, Jaramillo and Burke 1999), all records of female and basic plumaged Bullock's Orioles were re-reviewed by the 1999 Committee. After recirculation and considerable discussion, the acceptance of the above report was overturned. The report listed below was originally considered by the 1997 Committee, which deferred a decision pending availability of the information mentioned above (Dobos 1998).

- 1975 - Bullock's Oriole, one, 24 October, Cape Chin, *Bruce*.

## **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.

- 1999 - Ferruginous Hawk, one, juvenal, 3 April - 21 May, Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, *Prince Edward* (Ronald D. Weir, Joel H. Ellis, Craig S.A. McLauchlan, Christopher J. Escott).

The identity of this bird was clearly not in doubt, but its origin was felt to be questionable. The fact that the species is a short distance migrant and does not have a clear pattern of vagrancy in the east, and the extended length of time the bird remained in the area, caused members to be cautious and reject the report based on origin. An additional factor the members had to thoughtfully consider was that this species is kept in captivity by falconers.

## Updates/Corrections to Previous OBRC Reports

### 1998 Report (Ontario Birds 17: 62-83)

- under Corrections, the correction relating to a Rufous Hummingbird record listed under "1991 Report (Ontario Birds 10: 43-63)" should have read "1992 Report (Ontario Birds 11: 46-63)".

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

- under Accepted Records, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, 1993, add "Kayo J. Roy" as a contributor.

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Figure 8: Ontario Bird Records Committee members for 1999: Left to right: Rob Dobos, Ron Pittaway, Kevin McLaughlin, Margaret Bain, Bob Curry, Kayo Roy, Ron Tozer (Doug McRae, absent). Photo by *Mark Peck*.

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