



TORONTO BIRDS

Volume 1 Number 1
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Page 1 – 2** **Cover Photo:** Long-tailed Duck
Page 3 – 9 **Greater Toronto Area Bird Report:** December 2006
Page 10 – 11 **Notes on reporting and TOC Database**



COVER PHOTO

Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*)

Photo © Sam Barone

There probably is no more characteristic a winter anthem for the Toronto waterfront than the melodic yodeling of large flocks of wintering Long-tailed Ducks. Several hundred thousand Long-tailed Ducks probably winter on Lake Ontario as a whole. The Toronto section of the Mid-Winter Waterfowl Inventory alone has tallied as many as 23,000+ in a single year, and the entire Canadian shoreline of the lake has produced a total in excess of 220,000 birds. The record high count for the GTA was a single flock estimated at 80,000 birds on 1 March 1998 off Arkendo Drive in east Oakville, *Halton R.M.*



A WELCOME NOTE

Welcome to the Toronto Ornithological Club's new e-journal *Toronto Birds*. At the July meeting of the TOC executive council, it was decided to create a separate new electronic journal to publish the club's bird records and articles and reports on the status of birds and bird monitoring in the Greater Toronto Area.

The new journal, *Toronto Birds*, will be produced by the TOC Records Committee and distributed separately from the traditional TOC Newsletter. It has been decided by the Records Committee to produce ten issues of *Toronto Birds* per year. In order that all calendar years of this new journal will have a standard ten issues, we have retroactively re-packaged all Records Committee reports for 2007 into the first five issues of *Toronto Birds*.

Produced and edited by the Records Committee, Toronto Ornithological Club:

Don Barnett (Greater Toronto Raptor Watch), Glenn Coady (Records Councillor), Winnie Poon (Photo Editor), Roy Smith (Database), Joan Winearls (Archives), Dave Worthington (Compiler).

Toronto Birds publishes monthly bird records from the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario. It may also include articles and notes about birds, bird records, counts, surveys and birding in general, with the emphasis on the Greater Toronto Area and Ontario birds. *Toronto Birds* is distributed monthly to the active members of the Toronto Ornithological Club.

We welcome potential cover photos, or photos for use in illustrating the bird report. Please send photos to Winnie Poon winniepoon@sympatico.ca including date, location, subject, technical details and your preferred caption if any. Please do not email files exceeding 3MB without prior consultation. Please submit notes or articles to Dave Worthington worth@pathcom.com with a copy to Roy Smith rsmith@mrs.com. Bird observation records should be sent to Roy Smith.



GREATER TORONTO AREA BIRD REPORT - DECEMBER 2006

The following are largely unchecked reports, not authenticated records. Key to counties: DU = Durham R.M.; HL = Halton R.M.; PL = Peel R.M.; MT = City of Toronto; LO = Lake Ontario Pelagic; YO = York R.M. [County not specified for sites in Toronto]. Frequently cited place names in Toronto are abbreviated as follows: CSSP = Colonel Sam Smith Park; HP = High Park; HBP = Humber Bay Park (E or W); LSS = Leslie Street Spit; TI = Toronto Islands. Other abbreviations: HFR, DRF, YRF = Halton, Durham and York Regional Forests, respectively. TBO = Toronto Bird Observatory; TTPBRS = Tommy Thompson Park Bird Research Station.

Species names in **bold, underlined BLOCK CAPITALS** are OBRC rarities. These reports require acceptance by OBRC before they can be considered as part of the local records. They are qualified by [Documentation received] or [No documentation received], as applicable.

Species names in **bold** (but not underlined) are local rarities within the GTA. These reports require acceptance by the Toronto Bird Rarities Committee (TBRC) before they can be considered as valid records. They are qualified by [Documentation received] or [No documentation received], as applicable.

Individual species **marked * or specific reports marked *** indicate unusual local observations for which documentation is requested by TBRC and/or TOC Records Committee by virtue of rarity, difficulty of ID, extreme dates (early, late, unseasonal) or high counts.

Species names in [square brackets] indicate reports believed to relate to escaped or released birds, or to introduced birds which have not yet become established.

Names in *ITALICS* indicate subspecies, hybrids, morphs or other 'recognizable forms', which may be identifiable in the field. This does not necessarily imply that the compilers agree with such designations, or accept their validity.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - 1 at Newcastle Marina [DU] on 8th [No doc. seen] (D. Lycett fide DRBA).

SNOW GOOSE - 2 (blue) at Bond Head [DU] on 1st (GCarp fide DRBA) & on 2nd (MB fide DRBA). 1 (blue) AD at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 7th & 2 (1 white, 1 blue) AD there on 8th (SLo fide ONTBIRDS). 2 (blue) at Newcastle Marina [DU] on 8th (D. Lycett fide DRBA), 2 (1 blue, 1 blue/white intergrade) on 10th (RPye fide DRBA) & 2 (1 blue, 1 white) there on 11th (SLaF fide DRBA). 1 (white) JUV at Holland Landing S.L. [YO] on 16th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 (blue) at Bowmanville Harbour [DU] on 17th (anon fide OXC, fide DRBA).

ROSS'S GOOSE - 1 at Lake Drive, Keswick [YO] on 22nd [No doc. seen] (KDu fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS), seen in the Pine Beach area.

ACKLING (RICHARDSON'S) GOOSE - 2 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 7th (SLo fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 AD at Verobeach Road Pond on 17th [Documented] (HC, TXC).

CANADA GOOSE - 1000+ at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 7th (SLo fide ONTBIRDS), 1000 at Newcastle Marina [DU] on 8th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS), 700 at Cathedral Pond, Woodbine [YO] on 23rd (RBHS, WP) & 10,000-15,000 at Markham area [YO] on 31st (SLo fide TH).

[TRUMPETER SWAN] - 2 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 1st (JFa fide DRBA) & 3 (2 AD, 1 juv) at Lake Wilcox [YO] on 12th (S&JB fide TH). 14 at Lumsden Property, Aurora [YO] on 16th (TH, &, RHXC), appeared spontaneously this fall to join the resident swans that Harry Lumsden has in his pens.

[MUSCOVY DUCK] - 1 sitting on the street at Sandale Rd, Stouffville [YO] on 9th (Jack Walker fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 10th (CMH fide ONTBIRDS).

AMERICAN WIGEON - 1 at Newcastle Marina [DU] on 31st (MJL fide ONTBIRDS).

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - 4 at Holland Landing S.L. [YO] on 16th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN SHOVELER - 35 at HP on 2nd, 3rd, 13th & 28th & 50 there on 15th (SMF). 15+ at Mimico Creek Mouth, HBP on 9th (Bob Hawkins fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN PINTAIL - 4 at Halls Rd. [DU] on 2nd (AA). 1 M at HBP [E] & at CSSP on 9th (GC, MKP). 1 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 30th (SLo fide TH) & 1 at SE area of L. Simcoe [YO] on 30th (JMclean, BVNXC, fide TH).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - 5 at Sobeys Pond, Whitby [DU] on 2nd (AA), 1 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 2nd (SLo fide TH) & on 27th (DW).

CANVASBACK - 4 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 1st (JFa fide DRBA), 45 flying S at Peninsula D, LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 1 M at Regatta Road on 12th (JI).

REDHEAD - 20 at HBP on 6th (SMF) & 1 at Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] on 21st (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS).

RING-NECKED DUCK - 2 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 3rd (ETB fide DRBA), 1 at Pickering SL8, N of Conc 5 [DU] on 17th (SLaF fide DRBA) & 3 M at Bay 'C', LSS on 30th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS).

GREATER SCAUP - 1500+ at Peninsula D, LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 1000+ at Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] on 21st (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS).

LESSER SCAUP - 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 1st (JFa fide DRBA), 6 at Cell #3, LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 2 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 26th (SLo fide TH).

KING EIDER - 1 at L. Ontario off Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] on 17th [No doc. seen] (anon fide OXC, fide DRBA).

HARLEQUIN DUCK - 1 at Humber R. Mouth, Sunnyside on 9th (DJM fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 AD-M at Kew Beach on 17th (Bob Kortright,TXC, fide ONTBIRDS) was on the rocks at Wineva Ave between Woodbine & Victoria Park. TXC Sector 15. 1 AD-M at HBP on 30th (SMF) & on 31st (JRC,VC, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 M at Sioux Lookout Park, Burlington [HL] on week ending on 28th (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - 1 at HBP on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at LSS on 10th (GBry,TFN, fide ONTBIRDS).

LONG-TAILED DUCK - 500+ at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 500+ at Toronto Harbour on 20th (NMu).

BUFFLEHEAD - 200+ at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA), 1 at Toogood Pond, Unionville [YO] on 16th (H&MF,RHXC), apparently the first ever on Richmond Hill CBC; & 121 at Nature Reserve, TI on 20th (NMu,BY).

COMMON GOLDENEYE - 1 (v. late) at Palgrave C. A. [PL] on 1st (DJM fide TH), 30 at HBP on 6th (SMF) & 800+ at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA).

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE - 2 at Black/Farewell Creek, Oshawa [DU] on 17th [No doc. seen] (anon fide OXC, fide DRBA). West side of Oshawa 2nd Marsh [First ever for OXC].

HOODED MERGANSER – 5 reports from HP beginning with max. count of 21 on 2nd, single digit counts during mid month & last report of 10 there on 28th (SMF). 9 at Cedar Mills Pond [PL] on 3rd (DJM fide TH), 6 at Caesarea, Lake Scugog [DU] on 4th (SLaF fide DRBA), 8 at Kings Mill Park on 7th (SMF), 20 at Humber R. Mouth, Sunnyside on 11th (SMF) & 7 at LSS on 16th (SMF). 7 other reports of 4 or less birds thro' the month.

COMMON MERGANSER - 18 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 300 at Beaverton Harbour [DU] on 30th (JMcLean,BVNXC, fide TH).

RUDDY DUCK - 5 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 1st (JFa fide DRBA) & on 2nd (RPye fide DRBA). 1 at HBP on 6th (SMF) & on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS).

RING-NECKED PHEASANT - 1 M at Viceroy Road (Central), Thornhill [YO] @ 12:35hrs on 17th (RBHS,WP,TXC).

WILD TURKEY - 6 at Stouffville Rd, E of Gormley [YO] on 16th (Michael Biro,AK,RHXC) & 59 at 6th Conc & Hwy 21, Uxbridge [DU] on 31st (Philip Waggett,Bill Rapley, fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-THROATED LOON - 1 at Bay 'C', LSS on 30th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS).

COMMON LOON - Singles at Caesarea, Lake Scugog [DU] on 4th (SLaF fide DRBA), at CBC: S Peel - Sector 6 [PL] on 16th (SPXC) & at Bronte Bluffs Park, Oakville [HL] on 28th (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS).

PIED-BILLED GREBE - 1 at Bronte Harbour [HL] on 7th (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS).

HORNED GREBE - 1 at Cell #2, LSS on 10th (GBry,TFN, fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-NECKED GREBE - Singles at CSSP on 8th (Seigmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS), HBP on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS) & at LSS on 10th (GBry,TFN, fide ONTBIRDS). 2 at CBC: S Peel - Sector 6 [PL] on 16th (SPXC) & 2 at SE Tip, LSS on 30th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN GANNET - 1 JUV flying W at Bronte Harbour [HL] @ 09:15hrs on 17th (GE fide ONTBIRDS) did 2 plunge dives en route [no doc. seen]. 1 JUV at High Level Bridge, York Blvd., *Hamilton* @ 11:15hrs on 17th (Jim Anderson fide RD, fide ONTBIRDS) which flew west from Hamilton Harbour towards Cootes Paradise was probably same bird.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT – 7 reports of single birds thro' the month & 12 flying W at Bowmanville Harbour [DU] on 17th (anon fide OXC, fide DRBA).

GREAT BLUE HERON – 19 reports thro' the month included a high of 15 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 3rd (ETB fide DRBA), 2 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 9th (GC,MKP), 10 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA), 3 at Humber Marshes Area on 11th (SMF), 4 at CBC: S Peel - Sector 6 [PL] on 16th (SPXC) & all other reports were of single birds.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - 1 at bridge at Watson St E, Whitby [DU] on 2nd & 3rd (RPye fide DRBA), 8 at HBP on 2nd (AA fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 IMM there on 6th (SMF). 14 at Lower Don River (Queen St Bridge) on 17th (TLang,TXC), [TXC Sector 12].

TURKEY VULTURE - 1 at Oshawa Creek S of Bloor [DU] on 21st (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS).

BALD EAGLE - 1 at Thicksons Woods [DU] on 2nd (JFa fide DRBA), 1 IMM at Whitby Harbour [DU] on 2nd (AA), 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 3rd (RPye fide DRBA) & again there on 29th (anon fide DRBA). 1 2Y at Bay 'C', LSS on 10th (NMu,AA), 1 at Phyllis Rawlinson Park [YO] on 16th (GDe,&,TXC) & 1 at SE area of L. Simcoe [YO] on 30th (JMcLean,BVNXC, fide TH).

NORTHERN HARRIER - 1 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 4th (SLo fide TH) & 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 6th (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS). 14 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. [YO] @ 16:45hrs on 16th (KDu fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Caledon East [PL] on 27th (GCam fide TH) & 1 M at Strawberry Lane, Holland Marsh [YO] on 30th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK - 1 spent the month regularly visiting feeder at Major Mackenzie & Hwy 27 [YO] (JLo fide TH) & 4 other reports of single birds from different locations thro' the month.

COOPER'S HAWK – 10 reports of singles from different locations from 5th to the end of the month.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK - 1 JUV at Fairview St, Burlington [HL] @ 08:45hrs on 15th (Phill Waggett fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK - 1 at LSS on 10th (GBry,TFN, fide ONTBIRDS), late migrant? Flew down towards the tip, then back towards the city.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK - 2 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 2nd (RPye fide DRBA).

GOLDEN EAGLE - 1 AD at Solina Rd, N of Nash [DU] on 28th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA).

MERLIN - 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 3rd (RPye fide DRBA), 1 at CBC: S Peel - Sector 6 [PL] on 16th (SPXC) & 1 at Courtice [DU] on 24th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA).

PEREGRINE FALCON - 1 at Cranberry Marsh Area [DU] on 2nd (RPye fide DRBA;AA) & at Halls Rd. [DU] on 12th (G. Ernest fide DRBA). 2 at Clarica Centre, Islington on 14th (SMF), 1 at St. Marys Cement Plant [DU] on 17th (anon fide OXC, fide DRBA) & 1 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 31st (RLau).

AMERICAN COOT - 2 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 2nd (RPye fide DRBA). 6 reports of 1 at HBP thro' the month.

SANDHILL CRANE - 44 at Lambton Woods on 4th [Documented] (DL). 'Circling the river and Lambton Golf Course at fairly moderate height for perhaps 5 min before reforming and heading westward at greater height'. **[New ALL-TIME high count for GTA].**

PURPLE SANDPIPER - 1 at SE Tip, LSS on 30th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS).

DUNLIN - 1 at HBP [E] on 4th (Gabriel Lau Kin Jock fide ONTBIRDS).

WILSON'S SNIPE - 1 at Downsview Dells Park @ 14:30hrs on 17th [Documented] (DBo,&,TXC).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK - 1 at Fox St., Oshawa [DU] on 9th (THo fide DRBA).

LITTLE GULL - 1 at McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Res. [DU] on 3rd (THo fide DRBA) & 1 at SE area of L. Simcoe [YO] on 30th (JMcLean,BVNXC, fide TH).

BONAPARTE'S GULL - 46 at McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Res. [DU] on 3rd (THo fide DRBA), 1 at Holland Landing S.L. [YO] on 16th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 8 at SE area of L. Simcoe [YO] on 30th (JMcLean,BVNXC, fide TH).

THAYER'S GULL - 1 at Scugog Point, Nestleton [DU] on 18th (BFA fide DRBA).

ICELAND GULL - 2 (1 AD, 1 1W) at Kew Beach (Silverbirch Ave) @ 09:30hrs on 23rd (Bob Kortright fide ONTBIRDS).

KUMLIEN'S GULL - 3 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 16th [Photographed] (JI,RJP).

ROCK PIGEON - 330 sitting on wires at Steeles & Bathurst [YO] on 17th (RBHS,WP,TXC).

MOURNING DOVE - 200+ at Steeles E of Pickering Townline [DU] on 31st (Philip Waggett,Bill Rapley, fide ONTBIRDS).

EASTERN SCREECH-OWL - 1 at HP on 9th, 11th & 14th (SMF) & 1 (red morph) reported on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Kings Mill Park on 14th (SMF).

GREAT HORNED OWL - 1 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA).

SNOWY OWL - 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. [YO] on 11th (KDu,Chris Dunn,TH) & 2 (1 AD-M, 1 F/imm) there on 16th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at 195 Strawberry Ln, Holland Marsh [YO] on 11th (GNB fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at St. Marys Cement Plant [DU] on 17th (anon fide OXC, fide DRBA).

BARRED OWL - 1 at North Trail, Cranberry Marsh [DU] @ 16:00hrs on 6th (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 1 at YRF - Robinson Tract (nr. Warden)[YO] on 16th (NH, Marianne Yake, RHXC, fide TH).

LONG-EARED OWL - Several at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side) [HL] on 3rd (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS). 4 at B.O.R.C. (Outdoor Centre) [YO] on 17th (KDu,KXC, fide RJF) & on 27th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

SHORT-EARED OWL - 1 at Halls Rd. [DU] @ 17:01hrs on 7th & @ 17:45hrs on 17th (SLaF fide DRBA).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL - 3 at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side) [HL] on 3rd (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & on 31st (Jake Smythe).

BELTED KINGFISHER - 1 at Old Mill (Humber River/Bloor) on 5th (SHa), 1 F at Kings Mill Park on 7th (SMF) & 1 at HBP on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Newcastle Marina [DU] on 10th (RPye fide DRBA) & on 11th (SLaF fide DRBA).

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER - 1 at Halls Rd. [DU] on 1st (GCarp fide DRBA), on 2nd (AA), on 7th (SLaF fide DRBA) & last reported there on 9th (JFa fide DRBA). 1 at Finnerty SR [PL] on 10th (anon, fide PG, fide TH).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER – 7 reports thro' the month of 1 F at HP (SMF). 1 at Bronte Creek P.P. [HL] on 3rd (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA) & again there on 17th (GR,&,TXC). 1 F at Mill St., Bond Head [DU] on 8th & 11th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 M at Old Church Rd [PL] on 20th (anon, fide PG,fide TH).

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER - 1 at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA) & 1 AD-F there on 10th (HC).

DOWNY WOODPECKER – 4 reports from 6th to 19th of 5 or 6 at HP (SMF). 7 at TI on 20th (NMu).

HAIRY WOODPECKER - 3 (2 M, 1 F) at Lambton Woods on 11th (SMF).

NORTHERN FLICKER - 1 M at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 2nd (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Thicksosn Woods [DU] on 2nd (JFa fide DRBA) & 1 at Mill St., Bond Head [DU] on 8th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Faulkner Avenue Woods [YO] on 16th (CHvR fide TH), 1 M at LSS on 16th (SMF) & 1 at Oshawa Creek S of Bloor [DU] on 21st (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS).

PILEATED WOODPECKER – 7 reports from 2nd to 29th of 1 F at HP (SMF). 1 at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side) [HL] on 3rd (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 M at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA) & again there on 17th (GR,&,TXC). 1 at backyard in Oshawa [DU] on 26th (Otto Peter fide DRBA) & 1 at Boyd Field Centre [YO] on 30th (AA).

NORTHERN SHRIKE – 15 reports of single birds from 13 different locations thro' the month.

COMMON RAVEN - 2 at Palgrave C. A. [PL] on 1st (DJM fide TH), 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. [YO] on 5th (KDu,Chris Dunn, fide TH) & 1 (heard only, giving 4 deep calls) at Ward's Island, TI @ 13:30hrs on 20th [Documented] (BY). CW for Toronto CBC. 1 at Jokers Hill Stables [YO] on 23rd (RJF fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at YRF - Robinson Tract [YO] on 24th (BB fide TH) & 1 at Brock Rd & Taunton Rd. [DU] on 31st (Philip Waggett,Bill Rapley, fide ONTBIRDS).

SWALLOW SP. - 1 at CBC: S Peel - Sector 1 [HL] on 16th (SPXC). Reported (poss. Barn Swallow) at barns on W side Bronte Creek P.P.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE - 55 at TI on 20th (NMu).

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH - 5 at HP on 6th (SMF).

BROWN CREEPER - 1 at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA) & 1 at HP on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS).

CAROLINA WREN – 7 reports from 2nd to 29th of 1 at HP (SMF). 2 at Lambton Woods on 17th (GR,&,TXC), 1 at Snug Harbour, TI on 20th (NMu) & 2 at Backyard in S. Burlington [HL] on 21st (Phillip Waggett fide ONTBIRDS).

WINTER WREN - 1 at HP on 5th (SMF), 2 at TI on 20th (NMu) & 1 at Oshawa Creek S of Bloor [DU] on 21st (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS).

* MARSH WREN - 1 at Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] on 21st [No doc. seen] (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET - 2 at HBP [W] on 2nd (AA fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at North Trail, Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 10th (CMH fide ONTBIRDS).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET - 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 3rd (RPye fide DRBA), 1 at Shell Park [HL] on 7th (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at HP on 12th (SMF).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD - Singles at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side) [HL] on 3rd (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS) & Mill St., Bond Head [DU] on 7th, 8th & 11th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS). 5 at Pickering SL16, S of Conc 6 [DU] on 17th (SLaF fide DRBA) & 1 at Claremont C. A. [DU] on 31st (Philip Waggett,Bill Rapley, fide ONTBIRDS).

HERMIT THRUSH - 1 at HP on 7th, 2 on 15th & 1 on 21st (SMF). Singles at HBP [E] on 9th (HC), CBC: S Peel - Sector 6 [PL] on 16th (SPXC), feeder at 3410 Greenwood Rd. [DU] on 17th (SLaF fide DRBA), TI on 20th (NMu), near Mt. Albert [YO] on 28th (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS) & at 7 Fairway Dr., Scarb. on 31st (RLau).

AMERICAN ROBIN - 50+ at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA), 26 at Fairview St & Walkers Line [HL] on 21st (Philip Waggett fide ONTBIRDS) & 60+ at Claremont C. A. [DU] on 31st (Philip Waggett,Bill Rapley, fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD - There were 101 GTA reports this month, bolstered by CBC numbers. Three CBCs: Richmond Hill (13), Toronto (34) and Oshawa (9) reported record counts, perhaps assisted by the unbelievably mild conditions which persisted all month. Peel-Halton had 17 (record was 25 in 2003), and Kleinburg 17 (record was 19 in 2002). Uxbridge had none, and no data had been received from Pickering at the time of writing. Reports by County/Region (these include CBC numbers when details available) were: HL (3), PL (12), YO (32), MT (42) and DU (12).

BROWN THRASHER - 1 at Whitby [DU] on 8th & 9th (THo fide DRBA).

CEDAR WAXWING - 50+ at Claremont C. A. [DU] on 31st (Philip Waggett,Bill Rapley, fide ONTBIRDS).

* ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER - 1 first reported at Kings Mill Park on 6th (BY) & then again there on 9th (BY) & 11th (SMF). [No doc. seen] 1 at Mimico Creek N of Lakeshore on 17th [Documented] (GC,&,TXC). 1 at CN Kerr St, Oakville [HL] on 18th [No doc. seen] (CEdge fide ONTBIRDS) was initially found on the South Peel CBC on 16th, by Sheldon McGregor. It was reported again there on 24th (Dave Don fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS) & on 25th [No doc. seen] (AA).

- * NASHVILLE WARBLER – 4 reports from 1st to 6th of 1 at Allotment Gardens, HP (SMF;BY). [Documented].
- YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER - 1 at HBP on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS) & 7 at St Lawrence Park, Port Credit [PL] on 16th (MCR fide Sue Edmondstone, fide ONTBIRDS), on Peel-Halton CBC. 3 at Island School, TI on 17th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS) but not found again on 20th. 1 at Solina Rd, N of Nash, Courtice [DU] on 19th & 28th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA).
- * OVENBIRD - 1 at York University Keele Campus @ 10:30hrs on 17th [Documented] (CPG,SE,TXC). Hedge at NW corner of Vanier College Residence. [One seen there several days previously by Bob Read]. [TXC Sector 22].
- * NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH - 1 at Old Mill (Humber River/Bloor) on 10th (NMu,AA). At right side of entrance to the Inn at an ornamental sluice and water wheel in the patio. Active and feeding [No doc. seen].
- * WILSON'S WARBLER - 1 at HP from 1st to 4th & again there on 6th [Documented] (SMF).
- EASTERN TOWHEE - 1 at LaSalle Park [HL] on 19th (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS).
- AMERICAN TREE SPARROW - 38 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 36 at TI on 20th (NMu).
- * CHIPPING SPARROW - 1 at Gideon Ct, North York on 17th [Documented] (AK,TXC). Actually in the hydro cut about 200m E of Leslie St, N side in an area of churned up mud. Feeding with small flock of DEJU and one SOSP. [TXC Sector 17B].
- FOX SPARROW - 1 at Riverwood Park, Erindale [PL] on 7th (Judi Parker fide ONTBIRDS). Coming to feeder @ McEwan Field Station.
- SONG SPARROW - 1 at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA), 7 at LSS on 10th (NMu,AA) & 1 at Lambton Woods on 25th (AA fide ONTBIRDS).
- SWAMP SPARROW - 2 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 2nd (RPye fide DRBA) & 1 at Lambton Woods on 4th (DL fide AA). 1 at Peninsula B, LSS on 10th (NMu,AA), 5 at Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] on 21st (GCarp,Peter Hogenbirk, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Lambton Woods on 25th (AA fide ONTBIRDS).
- WHITE-THROATED SPARROW – 19 reports of 1 to 3 birds thro' the month.
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - 1 at Nature Reserve, TI on 20th (NMu,BY) & 1 AD at TI on 31st (SMF).
- LAPLAND LONGSPUR - 1 at Island Airport, TI & 1 at Nature Reserve, TI on 17th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS).
- SNOW BUNTING - ~200 at Strawberry Lane, Holland Marsh [YO] on 30th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).
- NORTHERN CARDINAL - 12 at Backyard in S. Burlington [HL] @ 16:30hrs on 21st (Phillip Waggett fide ONTBIRDS).
- * ROSE-BREASTED GROSBREAK - 1 F at Spring Creek Cemetery [PL] on 16th [No doc. seen] (SPXC). [Doc. required from 1 Nov onwards]. [2nd ever on this count, 1st since 1966]. It was seen there at a feeder on the N side on 20th [No doc. seen] (AA) & again there on 28th (CEdge,& fide ONTBIRDS).
- RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD - 1 at Scarborough Townline Swamp on 2nd (AA fide ONTBIRDS), 2 M at HP on 3rd (SMF) & 1 at HP on 10th (DJM,OFO, fide ONTBIRDS).
- RUSTY BLACKBIRD - 6 at Scarborough Townline Swamp on 2nd (AA fide ONTBIRDS).
- BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD - 1 F at HP on 7th & 3 F there on 19th (SMF).
- HOUSE FINCH - 19 at ON-X.com, Markham [YO] on 16th (RBHS,WP,RHXC) & 40 at Pugsley Ave, Richmond Hill [YO] on 25th (Denise Potter fide GDe, fide TH).
- WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL - 23 N of Rolling Hills Golf Course (S of Bethesda SR, E of Warden) [YO] on 16th (Michael Biro,AK,RHXC),. Photos of some of the birds by Jim Adamthwaite in Michael Biro's Bulletin #287. 20 at YRF - Robinson Tract [YO] on 18th (Theresa McKenzie,Glenn Reed, fide TH).
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH - 22 at TI on 20th (NMu).

CITED OBSERVERS: & et al.; OFO Ontario Field Ornithologists; TFN Toronto Field Naturalists; AA Alfred Adamo; BFA Bruce F. Aikins; MB Margaret Bain; GNB Garth N. Baker; DBar Dennis Barry; ETB Eleanor Beagan; DBo Dan Bone; S&JB Sharon and Jim Bradley; GBry George Bryant; BB Bruce Brydon; GCam Gordon Cameron; ICa Ian Cannell; JRC John Carley; VC Victoria Carley; GCarp Geoff Carpentier; JCa John Catto; OXC Oshawa Christmas Count; GC Glenn Coady; MCr Mark Cranford; HC Hugh Currie; GDe Gene Denzel; RD Rob Dobos; KDu Keith Dunn; SE Sandra Eadie; CEdge Cheryl Edgecombe; GE Gavin Edmonstone; TEt Tracey Etwell; JFa Jim Fairchild; BF Bruce Falls; H&MF Harold & Muriel Farrant; SMF Steven Favier; BFe Bruce Ferry; RJF Ron Fleming; CPG Chester Gryski; REH Ross Harris; SHa Sandra Hawkins; NH Natalie Helferty; CH Carl Hills; THo Tyler Hoar; DTH Doris Hofmann; TH Theo Hofmann; CMH Carol Horner; JI Jean Iron; RJo Richard Joos; AK Andrew Keaveney; SLaF Steve LaForest; TLang Anthony Lang; DL Dave Langford; RLau Rick Lauzon; MJL Marcus J. Lise; JDL J. Doug Lockrey; SLo Stan Long; JLo Joan Love; NMacd Neil Macdougall; CMcK Carol McKnight; JMcLean John McLean; DJM Dave J. Milsom; NMu Norman Murr; anon Unknown Observer; ONTBIRDS OFO Email Hotline; MKP Mark K. Peck; RJP Ron Pittaway; WP Winnie Poon; RPye Rayfield Pye; DRBA Durham Rare Bird Alert; GR Garth Riley; RBHS Roy B. H. Smith; RGT Ron Tozer; CHvR Christel von Richter; DW David Worthington; BVNXC Beaverton Xmas Count; KXC Kleinburg Xmas Count; RHXC Richmond Hill Xmas Count; SPXC South Peel Xmas Count; TXC Toronto Xmas Count; BY Bob Yukich.

Compiled by Dave Worthington for the TOC Records Committee.

Data entry by Roy Smith. 780 reports were added to the database for Dec 2006.

Please send reports to: Roy Smith 20 Harding Blvd. W #1002, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 9S4 Tel: 905 508 4045
Fax: 905 508 4730 email: rsmith@mrs.com by 8th of the following month, please.

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NOTES ON REPORTING AND TOC DATABASE

The TOC database is a valuable resource, which grows progressively more useful as the years go by. However, it is a lot of work to maintain and keep up with the volume of records, especially now that over 90% are coming from ONTBIRDS. That said, the TOC Records Committee would like to encourage all members to report their significant sightings on a regular basis. Reports can be submitted by email, fax or snail mail, as noted above. Members should be familiar with the Reporting Guidelines (Coady and Smith 2000), which indicate those records worthy of reporting in the GTA context, and those which require documentation. Please report promptly, so that the full picture is available. For example, if you know you will be away at month end, send in whatever you have before you leave. If you generate a significant volume of records, please submit them in 2 or 3 batches during the month, to help spread out the workload. Prompt reports are especially significant at the end of Feb, May, July and Nov respectively, as these mark the cutoff dates for quarterly reports to *North American Birds*. TOC is currently responsible for reporting *Toronto* and *Peel* regions to NAB; while *Halton*, *York* and *Durham* are done by others.

If records are worth entering and storing in the database, then they should represent high quality data. Please try and avoid things like 200+. Do proper counts, or don't bother. It is very tedious to enter this type of data. At a minimum, a record should have: species, # of birds (or estimate); date (or date range), time (if a rarity, sub-rarity or a NOMO!) – this is so that they will list in correct date-time sequence; precise location, and one or more observers. Location data is very important, because one day everything will be geo-referenced for accurate plotting. Most reports come from well-known 'sites' which have been defined in the database (well over 1000 so far), and hence inherit 10km square and UTM data. But if you report something from an obscure one-off location, it will end up with ? for the UTM, unless the person doing data entry can allocate it precisely. Use your GPS for one-off locations (NAD 83), if you have one, or give the location in terms which allow it to be accurately located from a map. For example, 200m W of intersection of aaa Road and bbb Blvd. is instantly meaningful, whereas something like #56090 Yonge St. may be very precise, but could be in Rainy River for all we know. However, for a NOMO please give both, if applicable, since it will be allocated to a specific territory if at all possible.

Since data is entered in batches by month and county (region), it is very helpful to separate out records by county. Use a separate reporting sheet for each county (or draw a heavy line between data for different counties or regions) and list the records in date/location sequence, if at all possible, just as they occurred in the field. Do not try to put them in species sequence. The reason being that more data will 'default' this way, meaning less typing. Of course, if your report is being generated by software, then you may not have control over this. For large sites such as Toronto Islands, Leslie St Spit, Humber Bay Park etc, multiple subsites have been defined, which allow data to be located more precisely. These should always be used for rarer/more unusual species, or when all records relate to one subsite within the main site. For example, most waterbird records from High Park will relate to Grenadier Pond, or possibly the South Duck Pond, and this should be specified if all were from one location. Likewise all hawk migration counts from High Park will relate to Hawk Hill, unless otherwise stated. In general, use the subsites for all cases of rarer or more unusual species. In some cases, which you should know about if you bird the affected locations, subsites are used to allocate data between different 10km squares, where a particular 'site' overlaps a square boundary. And please do NOT duplicate anything already reported to ONTBIRDS, as this causes a lot of extra work.

If you are acting as leader for a Jim Baillie Memorial Walk, you have a special responsibility to do proper counts, and set an example to the less experienced birders on the walk. Reports from JBMW *are* entered in the database, so they should be sent in ASAP after the event. If the walk relates to one site only, then your reported numbers relate to that one site, but in cases where the event becomes a birding trip along the lakeshore, please try and use separate columns for the main sites visited. At a minimum, all the more unusual species should be listed with their locations on the report form, so that they can be correctly allocated. Because most common species, recorded in small numbers, do not meet the Reporting Guidelines, the data from the JBMMWs may be the *only* records of those species going into the database these days. So please, no more plus signs or checkmarks in the JBMW lists. [Ok, you can use a checkmark for Rock Pigeon, if you really believe, in the Jim Baillie tradition, that they are not birds!].

Records which should be documented. The Reporting Guidelines are your guide in this respect, subject to the changes announced in the 2004 Report of the TBRC (TOC Newsletter # 166:1-6 (June 2006), which apply from 1 Jan 2006 onwards. [These changes removed the documentation requirement for all reports of Cackling Goose, Sandhill Crane, Thayer's Gull, Tufted Titmouse and Hoary Redpoll, and for spring reports of Hooded Warbler]. There are basically 6 categories of wanted records: (a) OBRC rarities (please send us a copy of the OBRC doc for the TBRC files); (b) species which are considered regionally rare in the GTA, such that all occurrences should be documented e.g. Yellow-throated Warbler; (c) species which require documentation in certain periods, but not others e.g. all breeding season and fall reports of Hooded Warbler; (d) reports which require documentation for CBC purposes only; (e) reports which represent unusual dates (early, late, or unseasonal) and (f) reports of high counts (seasonal or all-time). When doing any type of documentation, please take the time to complete the form as fully as possible. Consider that you are writing for a future

researcher, reading it in 10, 20, 50 or 100 years' time. They won't necessarily know you or your reputation or the conditions of that day, week or year.

Therefore, do not assume anything. Write very clearly and neatly, using a black or blue pen, or complete a soft copy of the form on your computer. Whenever possible, use the standard reporting form. Whether submitted electronically or on paper, this form will be photocopied and/or scanned, and in any event the paper original will live in the archives for many years. Each form should be a standalone document, referring to one species/one occurrence (others can be cross-referenced in the 'circumstances' section if required). If you don't know the 10-km sq, UTM or map # it is ok to leave these, and they will be filled in for you. In the experience section, give more detail rather than less, especially as it relates to the species or group in question. In the weather section, take the time to check this and photocopy the synoptic map from a newspaper one or two days before, if it is likely to have had any influence at all on the species, numbers or date being reported upon. Back issues of papers such as 'Toronto Star' are readily available in the Toronto Reference Library at Yonge & Bloor.

The 'circumstances' section is very important – it is here that you 'set the scene' for the analyst. For example, were you following up a report on ONTBIRDS, starting your winter list on 1 Dec, or maybe just covering your local patch the same way you do every Saturday morning? All of this is potentially relevant, or could be, as to how the bird was discovered. Writing a good description is an art which can be cultivated, and improved with practice. It is still needed, even if multiple good photos are available. There may be features not visible in photographs, such as behaviour and voice; while comparative aspects can only be described in terms of the observer's accumulated experience with the species. So while the description might be fairly short for a very distinctive species with a simple colour pattern such as American Avocet, you may well need additional pages if you had prolonged views of a rare sparrow or shorebird, or the bird was captured and full measurements taken. Having said that, a picture is worth a thousand words, and with today's ubiquitous digital technology, it should be possible to get some sort of photo-doc in most cases. If digital photos are being submitted, please add a note as to what modifications, if any, have been made. Some 'cleaning up' of poor or excessively dark originals (adjusting brightness and contrast), or edge-sharpening may be ok, but beyond that one is starting on a slippery slope which will make the work of any rarities committee that much more difficult. If you feel that you have to adjust an image beyond those basic modifications, then you should submit the untouched original as well.

If you are documenting a high count, then it may not be necessary to describe the birds in detail (unless they represent a species which would otherwise need description), but details and discussion of *how the count was done* are important and necessary. Any counts by sub-areas would be basic to this, when dealing with one of the larger sites such as Toronto Islands or Leslie St. Spit. Some discussion of the count (were they counted by 5s, 10s, 100s or what?) and visibility, whether the birds were static or moving, and number of count repetitions, should always be included. Photo-doc would be nice to have, if appropriate. Remember that high counts only apply to a specific site, so beware of casual claims of large numbers, made without specific reference to the area in question. If reporting a migration count from a hawk watch or bird observatory, always attach copies of the daily or hourly log sheets. If the high count is also unusual in terms of date, it should include some description and indication that the birds were correctly identified, otherwise future analysts will always wonder about this point (as might the current rarities committee!).

Clearly it is the finder's responsibility to document an unusual occurrence, or the 'designated counter' in the case of a high count from one of the hawkwatches. But sometimes the finder is negligent in this respect, or they may be a non-TOC member, or visiting from far away and do not know the local procedures etc. In which case, anyone who saw the bird should be able to step in and provide the documentation.

Please remember that there is a lot of work 'behind the scenes' in processing documentation forms, which can only start on receipt of the form. For every case where the bird (s) stays more than a day or so, a database report will be run, listing all the reports, and attached to the documentation. For unusual dates or high counts another database report will be run and attached, listing previous high counts and/or early/late dates etc. Very often, the original email reports to ONTBIRDS will also be copied and attached. This is so that the TBRC has the full picture available when evaluating a report. A tracking # has to be assigned to each documentation and this can only be done 'cleanly' when all reports for that species have been received and entered. If there were any photos attached, the labeling has to be checked and copies printed to go with the documentation. Then two extra copies of the entire doc. are made (i.e. original plus 2 copies), plus 5 copies of the voting form. Only then can the original doc. plus voting forms be forwarded to the TBRC Secretary, and the process of circulation to TBRC commence. Meanwhile, the two photocopies are used for backup in case the original is lost during circulation; eventually they are used for (a) a 'working set' of documentations deposited in the TOC Archives (ROM Library), and (b) a second set held with the TOC database for backup purposes.

Thanks for you cooperation. TOC Records Committee, Dec 2006.