



TORONTO BIRDS

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by Roy Smith and Winnie Poon



COVER PHOTO

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Photo © Winnie Poon (Digiscoped-Nikon Coolpix 4500 and Swarovski ATS 65HD).

A twitchable adult Ross's Goose at the Reesor Pond, Markham, York, first widely reported on 22 October by Stan Long, was a welcome sight for many local birders. However, some had to make multiple attempts to catch up with it, as was the case with Theo Hofmann, who finally added #264 to his York Region list on his fourth visit to the site (pers. comm.). This Ross's Goose will provide the 3rd record for York, assuming acceptance by the Toronto Bird Rarities Committee. It stayed to 21 November 2007; apparently enjoying the company of as many as ten Snow Geese through the period, using the pond for morning baths and midday rests, then, towards late afternoon, often commuting to feed with congregations of Canada Geese in nearby cornfields. This fall, about 7 more Ross's Geese have been reported throughout southern Ontario, which is a far cry from its extreme rarity status here a mere 20 years ago.

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

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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.

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GREATER TORONTO AREA BIRD REPORT – OCTOBER 2007

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 - 2 AD at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] @ 11:15hrs on 20th [No doc. seen] (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS). This location is E of Mossington Point; birds were last seen swimming E of McNeil Road, Willow Beach (about 2.5km further W). Seen again nr. Willow Beach [YO] on 24th - photo posted to OFO website (KDu,OFO-W). 1 AD flying S at NE corner Hwy 7 & Reesor Rd. [YO] @ 13:00hrs on 23rd [No doc. seen] (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS).

SNOW GOOSE - 2 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 3rd & 8th (JDL fide DRBA) & 1 there on 10th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at The Willows, Dundas Marsh [HW] on 9th, 3 at Bronte Harbour [HL] on 11th (anon fide CEde, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at N of Stouffville [YO] on 15th (Al Johnson fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 (white) at Warden, N of Major Mack [YO] on 17th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 21st (RBHS,WP). 5 (white) were first reported at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] @ 12:00hrs on 20th (SLo fide ONTBIRDS) and the 5 or a number of them were subsequently seen there or in the nearby fields where they would go off to feed with the Canada Geese on most days until the end of the month (m. obs.)



A group of 5 **Snow Geese** found by Stan Long on 19 October was the highest count so far for the Reesor Pond, York, which has proven to be an important stopover site for migrating geese since it was built in 2005. Photo © Winnie Poon

ROSS'S GOOSE - 1 AD (white) was first found in fields north of Reesor Pond [YO] on 14th (Chris Dunn, Julia M. Dunn) and also seen at Reesor Pond on the same date (HK,JMG), but not widely reported until 11:00hrs on 22nd (SLO fide ONTBIRDS). Digiscoped photos obtained shortly after (JI,WP). [Documented]. It remained there until the end of the month and was reported by many observers. It would go off to feed in nearby corn fields for portions of the day; for example it was found at the corner Hwy 7 & Reesor Rd [YO] @ 13:00hrs on 23rd (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) where it stayed until at least 16:00hrs.

BRANT - 20 at LSS on 17th (DDe,TTPBRS) was 1st record for TTPBRS.

ACKLING (RICHARDSON'S) GOOSE - 1 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 6th (CSAM fide DRBA), 2 at Warden, 1km N of Major Mack. [YO] on 21st (RBHS,WP), 2 at Lake Ontario off Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 24th & 25th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 flying W with CAGO at Hawk Hill, HP on 25th (NMu). 1 to 4 reported at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] or in nearby fields on a number of days between 16th to 27th (m. obs).

CANADA GOOSE - 400 at Warden, N of Major Mack [YO] on 17th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 527 there on 21st (RBHS,WP), including 1 with orange neck collar & black figs Y7E8 and 1 with yellow darvic leg band with black figs: #7811. 1000 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS) & 416 there on 28th (RBHS,WP). 1000 (in corn field) at Lakeridge Rd N of Taunton Rd. [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa) & 350 at Crescent Beach [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP). 285 at Country Glen Pond, Markham Bypass E of 9th Line [YO] on 21st & 450 there on 27th (RBHS,WP). 1420 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 21st (RBHS,WP) & 750 there on 23rd (NMu,ICa).

MUTE SWAN – 5 reports from TI from 7th to the 30th of between 41 and a high of 69 on 30th (NMu,&). 28 at LaSalle Park [HL] (RBHS,WP) & 19 at Bronte Bluffs Park, Oakville [HL] (RBHS) on 20th. 56 at Whitby Harbour [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa).

[TRUMPETER SWAN] - 14 AD, 9 IMM at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS), 2 families: 2 ad + 5 yng; 2 ad + 4 yng; all others AD - 1 w wing tag #686. There had not been any around here earlier in the year. 3 (Tag #s: 835, 968 and 969) at Valley Inn [HL] on 21st (SHa). 6 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS). Singles at West Beach, TI on 4th (NMu,ICa) & at Rouge Beach Park on 14th (Arlene Brazeau fide ONTBIRDS). 2 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 16th (ICa,NMu) & 24th (TH). 2 (1 w tag #D29) at LaSalle Park [HL] on 20th (RBHS,WP), 2 (no tags) at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 26th (JDL fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 (tag #s 125 and 900) at Lake Promenade, Etobicoke on 27th (Tom Cosburn).

WOOD DUCK - 5 at Trout Pond, TI on 4th (NMu,ICa) & 3 at TI on 6th (JBMW,HE). 1 at LSS on 30th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 4 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

GADWALL - 40 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&), 21 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 21st (RBHS,WP) & 82 on 26th (RPye fide DRBA).

AMERICAN WIGEON - 12 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS), 25 at Pine Beach, Keswick [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP) & 4 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

MALLARD - 225 at TI on 15th (NMu,ICa).

NORTHERN SHOVELER - 8 at Grenadier Pond, HP on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 75 there on 28th (JRC). 27 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 20th (NMu,ICa) & 12 there on 26th (RPye fide DRBA). 12 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&) & 4 at Holland Landing S.L. [YO] on 28th (RBHS).

NORTHERN PINTAIL - 1 at Solina Road Marsh [DU] on 21st (AAn,&, fide ONTBIRDS), 4 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&) & 2 at Corner Marsh [DU] on 26th (RPye fide DRBA).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - 24 at LSS on 4th (DDe,TTPBRS), 81 at Corner Marsh area [DU] on 20th (NMu,ICa) & 72 at Holland Landing S.L. [YO] on 28th (RBHS).

CANVASBACK - 8 at TI on 1st & 5 there on 7th, 10th & 15th (NMu;MVL;Peter McParland;Gunnar Bessel;ICa).

REDHEAD - 50 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&) & 1 at Lake Dr & Bayview Ave, Keswick [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP).

RING-NECKED DUCK - 1 at LSS on 14th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 2 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS).

GREATER SCAUP - 600 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

LESSER SCAUP - 600 (high #) at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS) & 174 at Lake Dr & Bayview Ave, Keswick [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP).

SURF SCOTER - 2 at LSS on 14th (DDe,TTPBRS), 6 at Sibbald Point Prov. Park [YO] on 28th (RBHS) & 1 at Lake Ontario off Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 31st (JDL fide DRBA).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - 5 at LSS on 17th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 2 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS).

LONG-TAILED DUCK - 3 at LSS on 19th (DDe,TTPBRS), 1000 on 21st (NMu,&), 1600 on 26th & 3700 at LSS on 27th (TTPBRS,DDe). 500 at Toronto Harbour on 30th (NMu,ICa).

BUFFLEHEAD - 20 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS), 21 at Algonquin Island, TI on 22nd (NMu,&) & 36 at Newcastle Marina [DU] on 25th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS). 131 at LSS on 25th & 170 on 29th (TTPBRS,DDe). 94 at Lake Dr & Bayview, Keswick [YO], 30 at Lake Dr, E of Woodbine [YO], 53 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] & 33 at Jackson's Point, L. Simcoe [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP). 600 at TI on 30th (NMu,ICa).

COMMON GOLDENEYE - 1 at LSS on 10th (DDe,TTPBRS).

HOODED MERGANSER - 7 at TI on 4th, 27 on 7th, 8 on 10th & 7 on 22nd (NMu,&). 5 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS) & 17 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

COMMON MERGANSER - 30 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS). 28 at Crescent Beach [YO] & 14 at Jackson's Point, L. Simcoe [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP). 18 at LSS on 29th (DDe,TTPBRS).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - 475 at Bond Head Bluffs [DU] on 1st (MJL fide ONTBIRDS) & 250 at Lake Ontario off Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa).

RUDDY DUCK - 1 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 12th (AA), 9 on 24th (TH), 8 on 27th (RBHS,WP) & 4 there on 28th (RBHS). 8 at Cell #3, LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

WILD TURKEY - 10 at Halls Rd. [DU] on 18th (JDL fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-THROATED LOON - 16 at L. Ontario, S of Kaitlin subdivision of Newcastle [DU] @ 16:00hrs on 22nd (MJL fide ONTBIRDS), 2 flying over at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 28th (RPye fide DRBA) & 1 at TI on 30th (NMu,ICa).

COMMON LOON - 21 flying S at Hawk Hill, HP on 12th (NMu). 200 at L. Ontario off, Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] & 50 at L. Ontario off Whitby Harbour [DU] on 27th (J. McKnight fide DRBA). 4 found dead at Beach W of Bowmanville [DU] on 21st (Rob Mciver fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 found dead at L. Ontario off Westside Marsh [DU] on 27th (Anne Visconti fide ONTBIRDS), presumably from botulism. 15 flying over at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 28th (RPye fide DRBA).

PIED-BILLED GREBE - 2 at Trout Pond, TI on 1st, 4th, 6th & 1 there on 7th & 10th (NMu,&;JBMW,HE). 2 at HP on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & on 14th (SMF). Singles at LaSalle Park [HL] on 20th (RBHS,WP), Pringle Creek, Whitby Harbour [DU] on 20th (NMu,ICa) & at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS). 3 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

HORNED GREBE - 4 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at LSS on 28th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 1 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP).

RED-NECKED GREBE - 16 at Lake Promenade, Etobicoke on 16th (Tom Cosburn) & 2 at Bronte Harbour [HL] on 20th (RBHS).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - The bird reported in the GTA in September, which moved to the Dundas Marsh, *Hamilton* on 30 Sept, remained there until at least 21 Oct (m.obs).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT - 228 at LaSalle Park [HL] on 20th (RBHS,WP) & 129 (80% juveniles) flying W at Hawk Hill, HP on 25th (NMu).

GREAT BLUE HERON - 1 at Rouge Beach Park on 21st (Arlene Brazeau fide ONTBIRDS) had got its bill caught in some mesh netting; was rescued by Toronto Wildlife and taken to rehab where it later died.

GREAT EGRET - 4 at Valley Inn [HL] on 21st (SHa) & 1 flying W at Hawk Hill, HP on 25th (NMu).

GREEN HERON - 1 at Kings Mill Park on 2nd (SHa).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - 14 at Rouge Beach Park on 14th & on 21st (Arlene Brazeau fide ONTBIRDS).

TURKEY VULTURE - 216 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 5th, 217 on 8th, 662 on 10th, 103 on 12th & 179 on 13th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 82 at Hawk Hill, HP on 8th & 1208 on 12th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS) was a new record 1-day count for this site (prev. was 1156 on 8 Oct 2005). 402 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 10th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS), 584 on 12th (J. Skene fide DRBA), 555 on 14th (J. Skene fide DRBA) & 118 there on 25th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 60 at SW of Steeles & Townline Rd. on 8th (ETB), 75 at Brookbanks Ravine on 8th (ETB,RJP,JI), 250+ at N of 401 & Markham Rd, Scarb. on 11th (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS), 39 at LSS on 12th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 200 at College & Spadina on 12th (Andreas Jonsson fide OUTON).

OSPREY - Singles at TI on 6th (JBMW,HE), Valley Inn [HL] on 21st (SHa) & at HP on 21st (SMF).

BALD EAGLE – 9 reports from Cranberry Marsh [DU] from 1st to 18th, most reports were of 1 or 2 (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & a high count of 6 on 14th (J. Skene fide DRBA). 4 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 5th, 3 on 8th & 1 on 14th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 2 at LSS on 8th (DDe,TTPBRS), 2 on 14th (MVL) & 1 there on 21st (TTPBRS,DDe). 1 JUV at Brookbanks Ravine on 8th (ETB,RJP,JI) & at Crescent Beach [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP). 6 JUV at Hawk Hill, HP on 24th (NMu fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 there on 28th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN HARRIER - 9 at LSS on 8th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 4 there on 21st (NMu,&). 16 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 10th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK - 47 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 5th & 113 on 14th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 230 at Hawk Hill, HP on 8th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS), 28 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 22nd & 39 on 24th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

COOPER'S HAWK - 1 F at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax [DU] on 1st (GCarp fide ONTBIRDS), seen carrying nest material thro' yard to area where nested in previous years, and believed to have nested in summer 2007. Why? Possibly repairing the nest for use as a winter roost or a feeding base for hunting from this winter? 4 at TI on 6th (JBMW, HE) & 2 on 15th (NMu,ICa). 2 at HP on 13th (SMF), 24th & 25th (NMu). 5 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 13th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

NORTHERN GOSHAWK - 2 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 16th (CMRW fide DRBA), 1 at TI on 22nd (NMu,&) & 1 at Forks of the Credit Rd. [PL] on 31st (JRC). 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 26th & 2 there on 29th (ISRW fide MDW, fide DRBA).

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK - 10 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 5th, 11 on 12th & 33 on 14th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 11 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 28th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK - 8 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 8th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 (v. late) at Scott's Pond, Oshawa Second Marsh [DU] on 21st (DRuch fide DRBA).

RED-TAILED HAWK - 209 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 10th, 81 on 12th, 138 on 14th, 91 on 28th & 128 on 29th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 57 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 16th & 292 on 28th (CMRW fide ONTBIRDS). 508 at Hawk Hill, HP on 28th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS) & 28 at 42 Cronin Dr, Etobicoke on 28th (AA).

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK - 2 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 25th & 3 on 28th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 2 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 28th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Hawk Hill, HP on 28th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS).

GOLDEN EAGLE - 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 8th, 26th, 28th & 31st, 3 JUV on 14th, 5 on 25th & 2 JUV on 30th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 (2nd or 3rd yr) at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 16th, 5 on 25th & 3 JUV there on 28th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Hwy 401 & Hwy 115, Bowmanville [DU] on 11th (D. Pye fide DRBA), 4 at Hawk Hill, HP on 28th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 flying over downtown Oshawa [DU] on 28th (DRuch fide DRBA).

AMERICAN KESTREL - 7 at Island Airport, TI on 4th (NMu,ICa).

MERLIN - Singles at Adelaide & Ritson, Oshawa [DU] on 19th (SLaF fide DRBA), LSS on 21st (NMu,&), Corner Marsh [DU] on 21st (RBHS,WP) & at Hanlan's Point, TI on 30th (NMu,ICa).

PEREGRINE FALCON - 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 3rd, 2 on 4th, 1 on 5th, 7 on 8th, 8 on 10th & 1 there on 28th (CMRW fide JDL, fide DRBA). 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 5th, 13th & 22nd (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 2 at Hawk Hill, HP on 8th (HPHW fide HSh, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Clarica Centre, Islington on 9th & 2 there on 10th (SHA). 7 other reports of singles from different locations thro' the month.

AMERICAN COOT - 1 at LSS on 6th & 10 on 21st (DDe,TTPBRS). 12 at LaSalle Park [HL] on 20th (RBHS,WP), 4 at Pringle Creek, Whitby Harbour [DU] on 20th (NMu,ICa), 2 at Valley Inn [HL] on 21st (SHA) & 6 at TI on 30th (NMu,ICa). 2 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 21st (RBHS,WP), 5 on 24th (TH), and 3 there on 27th & 28th (RBHS,WP).

SANDHILL CRANE - 1 flying over at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 12th (AA) was 3rd record for this site (fide MDW).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER - 15 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 7th, 6 on 8th & 7 there on 28th (JDL fide DRBA). 10 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 14th (JFa fide DRBA).

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER - 11 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 16th (ICa,NMu), 1 at LSS on 17th & 2 there on 22nd (DDe,TTPBRS).

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER - 1 at Whitby Harbour [DU] on 21st (RBHS,WP) & 2 at Frenchman's Bay [DU] on 26th (RPye fide DRBA).

KILLDEER - 11 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS) & 12 at Mimico Creek Mouth, HBP on 30th (Iain Fleming fide ONTBIRDS).

GREATER YELLOWLEGS - 2 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 12th (AA), 27th (RBHS,WP) & on 28th (RBHS). 9 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 at LSS on 26th (TTPBRS,DDe).

WILLET - 2 at Bay D, LSS @ 10:15hrs on 13th [Documented] (EOC).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS - 6 at Whitby Harbour [DU] on 14th & 19th (RPye fide DRBA). 6 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 27th (RBHS,WP).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT - 1 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 11th (JFa fide DRBA). 1 JUV first reported at Solina Road Marsh [DU] (also known as Coot's Pond) on 12th (Julia Marko Dunn fide ONTBIRDS) was reported there on most days until the 21st (m. obs). Photo from 20th posted to OFO Website (CMH,OFO-W).

RUDDY TURNSTONE - 1 at LSS on 6th (DDe,TTPBRS).

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER - 1 at Whitby Harbour [DU] on 14th (RPye fide DRBA) & on 21st (RBHS,WP).

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - 1 at Pringle Creek, Whitby Harbour [DU] on 14th (RPye fide DRBA), 18th (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 20th (NMu,ICa) & on 21st (RBHS,WP).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - 1 at Pringle Creek, Whitby Harbour [DU] on 18th (JDL fide ONTBIRDS).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER - 3 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 12th (SLo fide ONTBIRDS) & 7 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS).

DUNLIN - 55 at Whitby Harbour [DU] on 14th & 19th (RPye fide DRBA), 67 on 20th (NMu,ICa) & 45 there on 21st (RBHS,WP).

STILT SANDPIPER - 3 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 7th (RPye fide DRBA).

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - 1 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 12th (SLo fide ONTBIRDS).

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER - 4 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 11th (JFa fide DRBA) & on 21st (DW fide DRBA) [No doc. seen]. 5 JUV at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st [No doc. seen] (MB fide ONTBIRDS).

WILSON'S SNIPE - 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 10th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at LSS on 14th (MVL) & 4 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK - 1 at LSS on 25th (TTPBRS,DDe).

BONAPARTE'S GULL - 4 at LSS on 24th (TTPBRS,DDe), 38 at Holland Landing S.L. [YO] on 28th (RBHS) & 16 at Jackson's Point, L. Simcoe [YO] on 28th (RBHS,WP).

THAYER'S GULL - 1 AD at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 27th (WP,RBHS). WP has photos.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - 3 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS).

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO - 1 at HP on 12th (NMu) & on 13th (SMF). 1 (late) at LSS on 22nd (TTPBRS,DDe).

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - 1 at HP on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS).

EASTERN SCREECH-OWL - 1 heard at 218 Humbercrest Blvd. @ 19:15hrs on 6th (JRC).

LONG-EARED OWL - 1 banded at LSS on 23rd (TTPBRS,DDe).

SHORT-EARED OWL - 1 at West Mall & Queensway on 21st (SHa).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL - One banded at LSS on 16th was found 7 days later on 23rd in a mistnet at Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory, *Prince Edward Co.* Remarkable numbers were banded at LSS this fall, including 34 on 3rd and 21 on 23rd, for a season total of 305 as of 3rd Nov (TTPBRS,DDe). *Exceptional numbers were also recorded at Prince Edward Point this season, including a record-breaking 236 trapped on night of 13-14th (fide RTS, fide ONTBIRDS).* However, in the GTA very few were reported away from LSS. 1 at 165 Huron St, Toronto on 21st, was photographed as it perched in a small shrub 2m from front porch! It left shortly after dark (David Linton fide MCr).

COMMON NIGHTHAWK - 1 at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax [DU] on 1st (GCarp fide DRBA).

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER - 1 JUV at Hwy 12 & Durham Rd 15 (NE) [DU] on 5th (B. Glass fide DRBA).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER - Singles at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax [DU] on 6th (GCarp fide DRBA), at Palace Court, Doncrest [YO] on 25th (Michael Biro fide ONTBIRDS) & at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 28th (RPye fide DRBA).

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER - 14 at TI on 1st, 16 on 4th & 10th (NMu,&). 7 at HP on 3rd (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 8 at LSS on 14th (DDe,TTPBRS).

DOWNY WOODPECKER - 8 at TI on 1st & 6 on 4th, 7th & 15th (NMu,&). 5 at HP on 10th (SMF) & 11th (NMu).

HAIRY WOODPECKER - 3 at TI on 4th, 7th & 22nd (NMu,&) & 6 at TI on 30th (NMu,ICa). 4 (2 M, 2 F) at Mount Pleasant Cemetery on 30th (NMacd) & 2 at LSS on 30th (DDe,TTPBRS).

NORTHERN FLICKER - 23 at TI on 4th (NMu,ICa) & 17 on 10th (NMu,ICa,MVL).

PILEATED WOODPECKER - 1 at Cawthra-Mulock FON Reserve [YO] on 7th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE - 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 8th (DDe,TTPBRS).

* YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER - 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th & 17th (DDe,TTPBRS). [No doc. seen - doc. required after 1 Oct].

* LEAST FLYCATCHER - 5 at TI on 4th (NMu,ICa). 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 17th (DDe,TTPBRS).[No doc. seen - doc. reqd. after 16 Oct.]

EASTERN PHOEBE - 23 at TI on 4th, 15 on 7th & 10 on 15th (NMu,&). 12 at LSS on 12th & 14th, and 1 banded there on 24th (DDe,TTPBRS).

NORTHERN SHRIKE - Singles at Holborn Rd, 2km W of Leslie St [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS), near Mt. Albert [YO] on 21st (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS), at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 26th (JDL fide ONTBIRDS) & at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-EYED VIREO - 1 at Ward's Island, TI on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS).

BLUE-HEADED VIREO - 12 at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th, 2 banded there on 12th & 1 on 15th (DDe,TTPBRS). 4 at TI on 10th (NMu,ICa,MVL). 1 at HP on 16th, 2 on 17th, 1 on 28th & 31st (SMF)

RED-EYED VIREO – 9 reports of singles from 2nd to 15th.

BLUE JAY - 650 at TI on 1st (NMu,MVL,Peter McParland) & 350 there on 6th (JBMW,HE).

AMERICAN CROW - 2000-3000 migrating at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. [DU] on 20th (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS).

COMMON RAVEN - 1 at Middle Rd & Liberty, Hampton [DU] on 14th (THo fide DRBA) & 2 flying W at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS).

BARN SWALLOW - 1 at Duffin Creek WPCP [DU] on 21st (DW fide DRBA).

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE – 7 reports from TI thro' the month with high counts of 96 on 15th & 92 on 22nd & 91 on 30th (NMu,&). 6 reports from LSS from 5th to 24th with high counts of 45 on 12th & 65 on 17th (DDe,TTPBRS). 21 at HP on 11th (NMu) & 25 at South Trail/Platform, Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - 3 at TI on 1st (NMu,MVL,Peter McParland) & 6 on 22nd (NMu,&) and 15 at LSS on 11th (DDe,TTPBRS).

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH - 5 at HP on 11th (NMu); 5 at TI on 7th & 8 on 15th (NMu,&).

BROWN CREEPER - 9 at TI on 4th & 5 on 22nd (NMu,&). 16 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 6 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

CAROLINA WREN - 2 at TI on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Ward's Island, TI on 10th, 22nd & 30th (NMu,&). 1 at 31 Col. Butler Dr, Markham [YO] on 22nd & 24th (BKM). 1 at Mill St., Bond Head [DU] on 25th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS).

HOUSE WREN - 1 at HP on 4th & 11th (SMF). 1 at TI on 6th (JBMW,HE).

WINTER WREN - 12 at LSS on 1st & 6 on 22nd (DDe,TTPBRS). 34 at TI on 4th, 18 on 7th (NMu,&) & 6 on 12th (MVL).

SEDGE WREN - 1 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&). Seen well on Peninsula X.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET - 50 at TI on 10th & 75 on 15th (NMu,ICa). 150 at Peninsula D, LSS on 14th, 160 on 15th & 75 on 25th DDe,TTPBRS).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET – 8 reports from TI beginning with 34 on 1st (NMu,MVL,Peter McParland), high counts of 112 on 6th (JBMW,HE) & 175 on 15th (NMu,ICa), last report was 10 on 30th (NMu,ICa). 6 reports from LSS from 5th to 21st with high counts of 110 on 8th & 205 on 15th (DDe,TTPBRS). 24 at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 seen at HP on most days from 25th to end of the month (SMF).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER - 1 at LSS on 29th (DDe,TTPBRS).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD - 10 at Sideline 12 N of DR5, Pickering [DU] on 20th (ETB fide DRBA). 15 at Solina Road Marsh [DU] & 6 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 21st (RPye fide DRBA). 43 at Hawk Hill, HP on 24th, 7 on 25th & 11 on 28th (NMu). 10 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE - 1 at Ganaraska Forest E of Kendal (NE from N end of Kendall Rd) [DU] on 14th (THo fide DRBA). [No doc. seen].

VEERY - 2 at TI on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS).

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - 3 at TI on 1st, 18 on 4th, 3 on 7th & 2 on 10th (NMu,&). 5 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 6th & 3 on 8th (DDe,TTPBRS).

SWAINSON'S THRUSH – 5 reports from TI beginning with 7 at TI on 1st & 2 or 3 there up until the 10th (NMu,&). 2 at Colborne Lodge, HP on 3rd (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 banded at LSS on 24th (TTPBRS,DDe).

HERMIT THRUSH - 20 at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th, 42 on 12th, 28 banded on 14th & 19 banded on 24th (DDe, TTPBRS). 50 at TI on 12th (MVL), 66 on 15th & 4 at Ward's Island, TI on 30th (NMu, ICa).

WOOD THRUSH - 2 at Ward's Island, TI on 4th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at LSS on 26th (TTPBRS, DDe).

AMERICAN ROBIN - 108 flying W at Hawk Hill, HP on 12th, 216 on 24th & 189 on 25th (NMu).

GRAY CATBIRD - 10 at TI on 4th & 1 on 15th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD – Only 17 reports this month, due to a reduced level of fieldwork by RBHS/WP. Reported were 10 from [MT], 3 from [YO], 3 from [DU], and 1 from [HL] (ETB; Michael Biro; Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS; SHa; Leslie Kinrys; RLau; MVL; WP; RPyne fide DRBA; Ken Ridge fide DRBA; RBHS; DW).

BROWN THRASHER - 2 at Ward's Island, TI on 4th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] from 5th to 7th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at LSS on 5th & 22nd (DDe, TTPBRS).

AMERICAN PIPIT – 6 reports from LSS beginning with 26 on 4th, and 48 on 24th & last report of 7 there on 30th (DDe, TTPBRS). 31 at TI on 4th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS), 30 at Nonquon S.L. [DU] on 21st (MB fide ONTBIRDS) & 6 at Reesor Road Ponds [YO] on 21st (RBHS, WP). 75 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 16th, 20 on 20th (NMu, ICa), 55 on 21st & 75 on 28th (CMRW fide RPyne, fide ONTBIRDS). A high count of about 200 birds was observed at Markham on 18th (Jl, Declan Troy).



American Pipit, Markham, York, 18 October 2007.
Photo © Jean Iron

TENNESSEE WARBLER - 2 at TI on 4th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 14th (DDe, TTPBRS). 1 at HP on 3rd, 4th, 9th, 15th & 16th (SMF).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – 9 reports of 1 or 2 from 1st to 20th from HP (SMF; Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at TI on 1st (NMu, MVL, Peter McParland), 8 on 12th (MVL) & 1 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 12th (anon JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th, 1 on 11th, 2 on 14th, 1 on 24th & 25th (Dde, TTPBRS).

NASHVILLE WARBLER - 1 at TI on 1st, 7th & 10th (NMu, &), 2 on 4th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 on 6th (JBMW, HE). 1 reported at HP on most days from 1st to 20th (SMF). 1 at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 6th (HC fide DRBA), 1 at Marita Payne Park [YO] on 7th (TH) & 5 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 8th (DDe, TTPBRS).

NORTHERN PARULA – 1 at Thicksen's Woods [DU] on 3rd (NMacd). 1 at HP on 4th, 8th, 10th (SMF) & 2 there on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS). 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th & 9th (DDe, TTPBRS).

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER - 1 F at HP on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS).

MAGNOLIA WARBLER - 1 at Ward's Island, TI on 1st (NMu, MVL, Peter McParland), 1 at HP on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 11th (DDe, TTPBRS).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - 1 at TI on 1st (NMu, MVL, Peter McParland), 2 on 4th (NMu, ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 3 on 6th (JBMW, HE). 6 reports from HP of from 1 to 3 birds from 2nd to 12th (SMF; Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS). Singles at Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 6th (HC fide DRBA), at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 8th & 19th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & at Oshawa Creek Ravine, Oshawa [DU] on 8th (DRuch fide DRBA). 14 at Peninsula D, LSS on 8th & 2 banded there on 14th (DDe, TTPBRS).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER – 8 reports from TI thro' the month with highs of 200 on 7th (NMu, Gunnar Bessel) & 150 on 10th (NMu, ICa, MVL), last report was of 1 on 30th (NMu, ICa). 75 at HP on 3rd, 250 on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS), 200 on 11th & 75 on 12th (NMu). 120 at LSS on 11th (DDe, TTPBRS) & 35 there on 14th (MVL). 20+ at Franklin Beach, L. Simcoe [YO] on 20th (RJF, MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS).

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER - 4 at HP on 3rd (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 there on many dates from 6th to 27th (SMF). 1 at Hanlan's Point, TI on 4th & 15th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 15th (DDe,TTPBRS).

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER - 1 at LSS on 12th (DDe,TTPBRS).

PINE WARBLER - 1 at TI on 6th (JBMW,HE).

PALM WARBLER - 5 at Hanlan's Point, TI on 7th (NMu,Gunnar Bessel) & 7 at TI on 12th (MVL). 2 at HP on 16th (SMF) & 2 at Lakeside Park, Clarkson [PL] on 20th (SHa).

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER - 1 at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th (DDe,TTPBRS).

BLACKPOLL WARBLER - 1 at High Park on 4th & 6th and 10th (SMF). 1 at Peninsula D, LSS on 6th & 8th (DDe,TTPBRS). 1 at TI on 6th (JBMW,HE).

AMERICAN REDSTART - 1 at Ward's Island, TI on 1st (NMu,MVL,Peter McParland). 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 2nd & 12th (DDe,TTPBRS). 2 at HP on 3rd (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 there on 12th & 16th (SMF).

OVENBIRD - 1 at Ward's Island, TI on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH - 1 at HP on 6th, 9th, 27th (SMF) & 2 there on 7th (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS).

MOURNING WARBLER - 1 at Marita Payne Park [YO] on 7th (TH).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT - 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 6th (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 2 at TI on 15th (NMu,ICa) & 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 21st (TTPBRS,DDe).

WILSON'S WARBLER - 1 at Ward's Island, TI on 1st & 4th (NMu, &).

SCARLET TANAGER - 3 at Colborne Lodge, HP on 3rd (Jeremy Hatt fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at HP on 7th (SMF).

EASTERN TOWHEE - 1 at Peninsula D, LSS on 4th & 8th (DDe,TTPBRS). 2 at TI on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 on 12th (MVL). 10 reports from Cranberry Marsh [DU] from 6th to 28th were of either 1 or 2 birds from 19th to 22nd (CMRW fide ONTBIRDS). 1 M at Palace Court, Doncrest [YO] on 28th (Michael Biro fide ONTBIRDS).

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW – 11 reports from 12th to 31st included single birds until the 22nd, 18 at Halls Rd. [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa), 12 at LSS on 28th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 30-40 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

CHIPPING SPARROW - 13 at HP on 11th, 3 at Hawk Hill, HP on 24th (NMu) & 2 there on 27th (SMF). 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 15th (DDe,TTPBRS).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - 1 at Island Airport, TI on 1st (NMu,MVL,Peter McParland).

FIELD SPARROW – 6 reports of singles from 5th to 24th & 2 at HP on 19th (SMF).

VESPER SPARROW - 1 at HP on 18th (SMF).

FOX SPARROW – 17 reports from 7th to 30th included 1 or 2 up until the 14th & high counts of 9 at TI on 15th (NMu,ICa) & 6 at LSS on 24th (TTPBRS,DDe).

SONG SPARROW - 19 at TI on 7th (NMu,Gunnar Bessel), 30 on 12th (MVL), 35 on 15th (NMu,ICa) & 8 there on 30th (NMu,ICa). 36 at LSS on 21st (NMu,&).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW - 2 at TI on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 there on 10th (NMu,ICa,MVL) & 12th (Peter McParland fide MVL). Singles at HP on 5th (SMF), Lynde Shores C. A. [DU] on 12th (anon fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & at Peninsula D, LSS on 15th (DDe,TTPBRS).

SWAMP SPARROW - 3 at TI on 12th (MVL), 6 at Peninsula D, LSS on 12th & 1 banded there on 28th (DDe,TTPBRS). 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 22nd (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW – 4 reports from TI of 200 or more from 4th to 10th with a high count of 225 on 10th & last report of 100 there on 12th (MVL).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - 8 reports from TI from with highs of 112 on 4th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS) 167 at TI on 7th (NMu,Gunnar Bessel) & last reports of 13 on 22nd (NMu,&). 15 at LSS on 14th (MVL) & 46 on 21st (NMu,&). 25 at Halls Rd. [DU] & 20 at South Trail/Platform, Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa).

DARK-EYED JUNCO - 30 at Peninsula D, LSS on 5th, 120 on 12th (DDe,TTPBRS) & 60 at LSS on 14th (MVL). 5 reports from TI from 7th to 30th with high counts of 175 on 7th (NMu,Gunnar Bessel) & 250 on 10th (NMu,ICa,MVL). 75 at HP on 11th, 50 on 12th & 63 at the Hawk Watch on 24th (NMu).

SNOW BUNTING - 1 at Hanlan's Point, TI on 30th (NMu,ICa), 2 at Seneca College (King) [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 37 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. [YO] on 31st (RJF fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN CARDINAL - 14 at TI on 4th & 9 on 30th (NMu,ICa, fide ONTBIRDS).

INDIGO BUNTING - 1 M at Ward's Island, TI on 7th (NMu,Gunnar Bessel) & 1 at HP on 9th (SMF).

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD – 200 flying W at Hawk Hill, HP on 12th, 4450 on 24th & 1250 on 25th (NMu). 750 at LSS on 21st & 1120 on 24th (TTPBRS,DDe).

EASTERN MEADOWLARK - 1 at Solina Road Marsh [DU] on 21st (RPye fide DRBA).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - 14 at Ward's Island, TI on 1st (NMu,MVL,Peter McParland) & 125 (in am) there on 10th (NMu,ICa,MVL). 20 at LSS on 6th, 20 on 21st & 35 on 24th (DDe,TTPBRS). 13 at Hawk Hill, HP on 12th (NMu) & 8 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 28th (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

COMMON GRACKLE - 250 at Hawk Hill, HP on 24th (NMu).

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD - 50 (in am) at Ward's Island, TI on 10th (NMu,ICa,MVL), 1 at South Trail/Platform, Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 23rd (NMu,ICa) & 25 at Hawk Hill, HP on 24th (NMu).

PURPLE FINCH – 10 reports of less than 10 thro' month & 13 at Hawk Hill, HP on 12th & 26 on 24th (NMu). 33 at Ward's Island, TI on 15th (NMu,ICa), was the highest GTA count since Feb 1999 - is an irruption coming?

HOUSE FINCH - 24 at LSS on 21st (TTPBRS,DDe).

COMMON REDPOLL - 12 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 28th (RPye fide DRBA), 1 at 33 Ava Court, Brampton [PL] on 28th (AA) & 1 banded at Peninsula D, LSS on 28th (DDe,TTPBRS).

PINE SISKIN - 12 at Bathurst & Sheppard on 10th (Leslie Kinrys fide OUTON), 1 at LSS on 12th & 16 there on 17th (DDe,TTPBRS). 1 at Cranberry Marsh [DU] on 12th (JFa fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 38 at Ward's Island, TI on 15th (NMu,ICa), many @ feeders at Mill St., Bond Head [DU] on 17th & 34 there on 25th (MJL fide ONTBIRDS). 100+ at feeder at 821 Montsell Ave, Willow Beach [YO] on 19th (Lorena Campbell fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS) & 3 at Solina Rd N of Nash, Courtice [DU] on 19th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA).

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH - 33 at Hanlan's Point, TI on 22nd (NMu,&).

EVENING GROSBEAK - 35-40 at her feeders at 821 Montsell Ave, Willow Beach [YO] on 19th (Lorena Campbell fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS) & 3 (2 M, 1 F) there at 10:30hrs on 20th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS). 10 at Solina Rd N of Nash, Courtice [DU] on 19th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA) & 55 at Palace Court, Doncrest [YO] on 28th (Michael Biro fide ONTBIRDS).

HOUSE SPARROW - 22 at LSS on 21st (TTPBRS,DDe).

Cited Observers: & et al.; ISRW Iroquois Shores Raptor Watch; AA Alfred Adamo; AAn Anne Anthony; MB Margaret Bain; ETB Eleanor Beagan; TTPBRS Tommy Thompson Park Bird Res. Station; ICa Ian Cannell; JRC John Carley; GCarp Geoff Carpentier; GC Glenn Coady; MCr Mark Cranford; HC Hugh Currie; DDe Dan Derbyshire; RD Rob Dobos; KDu Keith Dunn; CEdge Cheryl Edgecombe; HE Herb Elliot; JFa Jim Fairchild; SMF Steven Favier; RJF Ron Fleming; JMG Jim Griffith; HPHW HP Hawk Watch; SHa Sandra Hawkins; FH Fred Helleiner; THo Tyler Hoar; TH Theo Hofmann; CMH Carol Horner; JI Jean Iron; HK Harry Kerr; SLaF Steve LaForest; RLau Rick Lauzon; MJL Marcus J. Lise; MVL Margaret Liubavicius; JDL J. Doug Lockrey; SLo Stan Long; NMacd Neil Macdougall; BKM Barry MacKay; CSAM Craig

S.A. McLauchlan; KM Kevin McLaughlin; JBMW Jim Baillie Memorial Walk; NMu Norman Murr; MU-BB Muskoka Bird Board; EOC Ed O'Connor; anon Unknown Observer; OFO-W OFO Website; ONTBIRDS OFO Email Hotline; OUTON OutdoorOntario.net; RJP Ron Pittaway; WP Winnie Poon; RPy Rayfield Pye; CMRW Cranberry Marsh Raptor Watch; DRBA Durham Rare Bird Alert; DRuch Dave Ruch; HSh Howard Shapiro; RBHS Roy B. H. Smith; RTS Terry Sprague; MvdT Mike Van Den Tillaart; MDW Mike Williamson; DW David Worthington.

Compiled by Dave Worthington for the TOC Records Committee.

Photo editing by Winnie Poon.

Data entry by Roy Smith. 1039 reports were added to the database for October 2007.

Please send reports to: Roy Smith 20 Harding Blvd. W, Suite 1002, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 9S4 Tel: 905-5084045 Fax: 905-5084730 email: rsmith@mrs.com by 8th of the following month, please. Send photos for possible use in the bird report to: winniepoon@sympatico.ca, following guidelines in TOC Newsletter #175 (March 2007).

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Reesor Pond, York, at dusk; 4 November 2007. Photo © Winnie Poon



Ross's Goose in the Greater Toronto Area

Roy Smith and Winnie Poon

Introduction

It may seem surprising today to think that, as recently as the 1930s, no one knew for certain where the breeding grounds of Ross's Goose *Chen rossii* were located. But in 1938, this question was answered when Andrew Gavin reported finding a small colony in the Perry River region of the central Canadian arctic (at that time the Northwest Territories, now Nunavut). Back then, the population was believed to be quite small, perhaps even as low as 2000 in 1949, with the vast majority wintering in the central valley of California (Godfrey 1966). However, reasonably good winter estimates were not obtained until 1956, when it was discovered that Ross's Geese tended to separate from Snow Geese *Chen caerulescens* in late winter, and could then be counted fairly accurately. During the period 1956-1974, winter numbers in central California averaged 23,400, with a minimum of 7925 in 1957 and a maximum of 38,980 in 1968 (Bellrose 1976).

At that time, virtually the entire breeding population was found in what is now the Queen Maud Gulf Migratory Bird Sanctuary, and almost all of them wintered in California, with only a handful being seen on the Gulf Coast, where they were evidently very rare. The California birds were largely restricted to the central valley, with most found in the San Joaquin valley centered on Merced National Wildlife Refuge, which remains perhaps the most significant wintering area to this day. This western-biased distribution, with birds from the central arctic moving south to stage in Alberta and Saskatchewan, then heading south-west and crossing the Rockies to reach northern California, before moving south to the wintering area, probably explains why Ontario ornithologists from earlier times had no records of this species from southern Ontario, let alone the Greater Toronto Area (e.g. Fleming 1906, Saunders 1947, Tozer and Richards 1974).

But what changed for the Ross's Goose, and as a consequence for birders in eastern North America, was that since at least the 1950s, it has undergone a major increase in numbers and expansion of the breeding range, almost always nesting in mixed colonies with Snow Geese. While some expansion took place to the west (as far as Alaska), it seems that the greatest change was a steady progression eastwards through Nunavut, and south along the tundra coastline of Hudson Bay, reaching La Perouse Bay (Churchill), Manitoba in the early 1970s, and the Cape Henrietta Maria area of northern Ontario by 1975. This range expansion, together with an increasing tendency for these eastern-breeding Ross's Geese to migrate south with central flyway Snow Geese and winter along the Gulf Coast, must have set the stage for the increase in records which birders in southern Ontario were about to witness.

During the 1970s and 1980s Ross's Goose was still virtually unrecorded in southern Ontario, but it is interesting to note that one seen at Zimmerman's Pond, Grimsby, *Niagara R.M.*, which stayed from early November 1970 to January 1971 and at the time was dismissed as an escape, has recently been accepted as the first record (of 5) for the Hamilton Study Area (Curry 2006). Meanwhile, the first accepted record for New York State occurred in 1983 (Levine 1998). Breeding was not confirmed for Ontario itself during the period of the first Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (1981-1985, but in 1984 a flightless adult male with two young was trapped for banding on Akimiski Island in James Bay (Nunavut), and provided the only record for that Atlas project (Prevett in Cadman *et al.* 1987).

By the early 1990s, as many as 200,000 were estimated to be wintering in California, while estimates from other parts of the expanding winter range included 11,000 in New Mexico, 10,000-20,000 in northern Mexico, and up to 70,000 along the gulf coast of Texas, with unknown numbers further east in Louisiana and Arkansas (Ryder and Alisauskas 1995). These numbers afford some perspective on the scale of the increase, but they are probably a lot higher now. For example, an estimate of 805,000 for the entire North American spring population in 1998, along with the observation that "virtually nothing is known of the migration of the eastern population of the Ross's Goose" was provided by Sandilands (2005).

Thus we might view the finding of the first nests for Ontario in 2005, during fieldwork for the second Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (2001-2005), as an inevitable step in the evolving history of this species, but it was actually a matter of luck (Coady *et al.* 2007)! In their paper, which comprehensively describes this event, the authors provide an excellent account of the history of the range expansion, to which readers are referred for more details and the underlying references.

Table 1 lists all 19 reports known to have occurred in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) since the formation of Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) in 1982. The OBRC delisted Ross's Goose as of 31 December 2006, when it became evident that the increasing numbers being reported exceeded their threshold requirements. As of that date, there had been 51 accepted records for southern Ontario (Crins 2007). Thus we can look back over a period of only 20 years, during which time the status of Ross's Goose in the GTA changed from being previously unrecorded, to only a 'local rarity'! In ornithological terms, this represents a remarkable change in such a short time period.

Table 1: Reports of Ross's Goose in the Greater Toronto Area, 1987-2007

Key to symbols and abbreviations:

- = Rejected by OBRC
- = Accepted by OBRC
- = Not submitted to (or not yet reviewed) by OBRC
- = Not yet submitted to TBRC
- Δ = Awaiting review by TBRC

DRBA = Durham Rare Bird Alert.
 ONTBIRDS = bird sightings listserv of Ontario Field Ornithologists.

- 1987 The first report of a Ross's Goose in the GTA involved an adult which was found in the Halls Road/Cranberry Marsh area of *Durham R.M.* on 1 October 1987 (Jaramillo 1990). It remained in that area through October and November until the last sighting on 1 December (m. obs). The OBRC report for 1989 suggested that this was the same bird which had been originally found at the Cedar Estate ponds near Bass Lake, *Simcoe Co.* on the remarkably early date of 30 August 1987, and since that one had turned up in a "waterfowl park", among Canada Geese, and where a Barnacle Goose was also present, its origin was considered questionable (Wormington and Curry 1990). The following dates were provided for the *Simcoe* bird: 30 August -20 September - Bass Lake; 20 September - Matchedash Bay; and 23 September – Bass Lake (again). This Ross's Goose turned up at Cranberry Marsh in the presence of two identifiable neck-banded Canada Geese from James Bay that it had associated with earlier at the Simcoe County site. It should also be noted that this bird (or another?) then moved on to the Niagara area where it was reported from St. Catharines from 27 January – 12 February 1988. Again, there seems to have been an assumption that the same bird was involved? Although OBRC rejected this series of reports, today with the benefit of hindsight, a case might be made for re-evaluation?



17 September 1987, Cedar Estate ponds, *Simcoe County*. This is very likely the same individual seen at Cranberry Marsh 1 October – 1 December 1987. Photo © *Chris Escott*

- 1996 It was another nine years before the next one showed up – found at Humber Bay Park (East), *Toronto* on 18 March. Good colour photographs were obtained, and the bird was seen by Zak Smith, Terry Smith, Naish McHugh and probably several others. On 19 March it was relocated by Norm Murr in the early morning, but at 07:16h it took off with two Canada Geese, flew off to the north, and was not seen again. It was accepted by OBRC for 18-19 March, with Barbara Reid as finder (Dobos 1997). This was the 1st accepted record for the GTA and 1st record for *Toronto*.
- 1997 One found by Barbara Kalthoff at Humber Bay Park (West), *Toronto* on 11 March was subsequently seen by many observers in that area. Most reports called it an immature, but one described it as adult, and OBRC did not assign an age when it accepted 11-16 March 1997 for the dates (Dobos 1998). However, photographs indicate 1st basic plumage. It was seen, *inter alia*, by Craig McLaughlin on 11th, Bob Yukich on 12th, Alfred Adamo and Craig McLaughlin on 13th, and by Craig McLaughlin, Norm Murr, and Glenn Coady (with a Jim Baillie Memorial Walk group) on 15th. On 16th it was seen by Norm Murr at the foot of Norris Ave, by Theo Hofmann back at Humber Bay Park (West) at 11:00h, and by Frank Pinilla at 15:00h, by which time it had moved to Superior Ave. All these locations are quite close to Humber Bay Park. Good photos showed that the bird was unbanded.



Ross's Goose on **15 March 1997**, Humber Bay Park West, *Toronto*. Note the sparse dusky marks on the head and mantle, and a few larger dark spots at the left side of the neck indicating that it was an immature white morph bird.
 Photo © Glenn Coady



Ross's Goose on **15 March 1997**, Humber Bay Park West, Toronto. Photo © Glenn Coady



Ross's Goose (right) and Canada Goose on **15 March 1997**, Humber Bay Park West, Toronto. Photo © Glenn Coady



The Ross's Goose was last seen on **16 March 1997** at Superior Avenue, near Humber Bay West, *Toronto*.
Photo © Frank Pinilla

- 1997 The 4th report for the GTA involved another bird later that spring. Originally found on 5 April by S. Cluff, near Seneca College on the 15th Sideroad of King, *York R.M.*, it was reported early the next day on Bloomington Sideroad, W of Bathurst (Gerry Bennett; Norm Murr, Craig McLaughlin; Frank Pinilla). Later on 6th it moved about 5km to a larger pond on Bathurst near the King-Vaughan Line, and disappeared on 9 April (Jim Macey). OBRC accepted the record for 5 – 9 April 1997, with photos on file (Dobos 1998). This was the 1st record for *York R.M.*
- 1997 This year proved to be a good one for Ross's Geese in the GTA, as there was one more record, in late fall. According to the TOC database, J. Murray Speirs and Margaret Wilson found one at Uxbridge, *Durham R.M.*, on 5 November. On the 7th it moved to the Cranberry Marsh area, *Durham R.M.*, where it was seen by many observers on multiple dates until 22 December. The report for 7 November is not in the TOC database. OBRC accepted: "definitive basic, white morph, 7 November - 22 December, Ajax and Whitby, *Durham* (Margaret J.C. Bain, finder J. Murray Speirs)" (Dobos 1999). The reference to Ajax and Whitby probably refers to the fact that on 9th and 29th November (and perhaps on other dates), it was seen along the townline (Lakeridge Road), on the Ajax side. This was the 1st accepted record for *Durham R.M.*
- 1999 Another interesting record of a Ross's Goose that moved across three regions occurred in the early spring. According to the database, this bird was first reported on 9th February at the Desjardins Canal, *Hamilton* (Toronto Star Hotline), and was seen again at Dundas, *Hamilton* on 16 February (Roy Hough, many observers). It next turned up in *Halton R.M.*, where it was seen on the playing fields of St Thomas Aquinas school at Rebecca and Dorval Drive, Oakville on 20th (Mark K. Peck *fide* Glenn Coady). On 28th it was noted at the foot of East Street, Watersedge Park, Bronte (Ebrahim and Karalee Patel, Don Perks, *fide* Glenn Coady), then at 16:25h at Southwind Drive, Bronte (Sheila Bowslaugh *fide* ONTBIRDS), and by 18:30h it had gone to roost with Canada Geese on the ice of Bronte Creek, near Bronte Road and Marine Drive (Gavin Edmondstone *fide* ONTBIRDS). Apparently, there was enough street lighting to see the bird, because Mark Cranford reported it there as late as 21:45h on that date! However, it could not be found in the Bronte Harbour area on 1 March (Gavin Edmondstone). The next report we have came from Rattray Marsh, *Peel R.M.* on 10 March (Dan Russell *fide* University of Toronto Birdboard), while on 14th March it was feeding with a few Canada Geese at Richards Memorial Park, *Peel R.M.* (Jean Niskanen, *fide* ONTBIRDS). Good photographs of this bird, by Barry Cheriére, were published in *Birders Journal* (Bain and Shanahan 1999). OBRC accepted "one, first basic, white morph, 16 February - 14 March" (Roy 2000; Curry 2000). This was the first record for *Halton R.M.* and *Peel R.M.*

- 1999 Humber Bay Park must have some special attraction for migrant Ross's Geese, because one was again found there on 5 November, initially in the eastern section. Occasionally it went to feed on the grass lawn of Christie's bakery on north side of Lakeshore Road and on the lawns interspersed along the motel strip. It is possible that this bird first turned up on 4 November, because a late report from Bob Yukich mentioned that at about 12:00h on that date he had distant views of a small white goose landing with Canada Geese at the mouth of the Mimico Creek. This bird stayed to 3 December and because of its long stay it was seen by dozens of birders and photographed by many. The database records at least 19 observers who were known to have seen and/or reported it. Glenn Coady obtained two minutes of video at Sunnyside on the 6th, and was apparently the last person to see it on the morning of 3 December. OBRC accepted "one, definitive basic, white morph, 5 November – 3 December, Toronto (Humber Bay Park East), Toronto (Craig S.A. McLaughlin, Roy B.H. Smith, William J. Crins, Kayo J. Roy, found by Leon Schlichter). Photos on file" (Roy 2000).



7 November 1999, Humber Bay Park East, Toronto.
Photo © Roy Smith

- 2000 One adult at Whitby Harbour, *Durham R.M.*, was seen briefly at 07:45h on 17 December during the Oshawa Christmas Count. Found by Doug Tozer, also seen by Ron Tozer and Margaret Bain (Roy 2001).
- 2001 At about 11:00h on 8 December, Tyler Hoar found two small white geese along with 21 Snow Geese in Cranberry Marsh, *Durham R.M.* At 12:00h they all left, flying northwest, and Tyler followed them by car up Lakeridge Road. On returning about 20 minutes later, he met Harry Kerr and Craig McLaughlin back at Cranberry Marsh. They also had just seen these birds, now returning as a group, but missing two of the Snow Geese. They were identified as one adult and one immature, and reported as such on ONTBIRDS over the next several days up to 15 December (many observers, including J.Doug Lockrey, Winnie Poon, Miguel Demeulemeester, Glenn Coady, Leslie Johnston, Eleanor Beagan, Frank Pinilla, Carol Horner, and Paul Mackenzie). However, on 12 December the birds were seen and documented by Curtis Marantz, who considered the juvenile to be a hybrid Ross's x Snow Goose, based on his extensive experience in California. Hence OBRC accepted just the adult as a Ross's Goose, citing "one, definitive basic, white morph, 8-15 December, Whitby (Cranberry Marsh), *Durham* (Curtis A. Marantz, found by Harry Kerr)", and noting that the second bird was considered to be a hybrid (Roy 2002). The database has two later reports of these birds: on 18 December by Craig McLaughlin and on 29 December by Geoff Carpentier (both *fide* ONTBIRDS).
- 2002 Another report involving hybrids concerned four birds first seen at a stormwater pond adjacent to Hwy 407, *Halton R.M.* at 14:30h on 13 November. The initial report was of 3 Ross's Geese plus one hybrid, and these numbers were given by all subsequent observers on 13th and 14th November (Robert Curry, Glenda Slessor, Thomas A. Crooks, Dennis and Gwen Lewington) except Alfred Adamo, who reported two Ross's Geese and two hybrids on 14th. The *North American Birds* report for that period also listed two Ross's Geese and two hybrids (Bain 2003). OBRC accepted "Two, basic, white morph, 13-15 November, Mississauga, *Peel* (Robert Curry, found by Robert Z. Dobos)" and further stated that "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*)" (Crins 2004). TOC database does not contain the report for the 15 November. It seems that few birders got to see these birds, perhaps because it was an awkward location to access. It was reported (incorrectly) at the time as "407 south of Britannia Road", but is actually south of Derry Road, not Britannia, and in any event is in *Halton*, not *Peel*.
- 2002 One seen at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham R.M.* on 15 November (J. McKnight *fide* DRBA; J. Doug Lockrey *fide* ONTBIRDS) (Bain 2003).
- 2002 One seen at Bayshore Park, Burlington, *Halton R.M.* at 12:00h on 12 December (Ron Scovell); at 17:00h it flew to the nearby LaSalle Marina. It was also seen that day by Paul D. Smith and Rob Dobos, and identified as a juvenile. It remained in the area until 14 December (Curry 2006); however, the database has a later report for 16 December (Alberto Marcone *fide* ONTBIRDS).

- 2003 Stan Long found an adult Ross's Goose at Coyote Pond in Markham, *York R.M.*, on 1 April 2003 and also saw it there on 2nd (Hofmann 2003). However, OBRC only listed an accepted date of the 1st (Crins 2006).
- 2005 One at Lynde Shores C.A., *Durham R.M.* on 21 October (Michael Sloley *vide* J. Doug Lockrey, *vide* ONTBIRDS).
- 2006 One at Scugog Point, Nestleton, *Durham R. M.* on 22 November (Bruce F. Aikins *vide* DRBA).
- 2006 One at Lake Drive, Keswick, *York R.M.* on 22 December (Keith Dunn *vide* Ron Fleming, *vide* ONTBIRDS).
- 2007 One at Ashbridges Bay Sewage Plant, *Toronto* on 11 March (Margaret Liubavicius *vide* Norm Murr).
- 2007 One at Lot 1 Conc.3, Darlington, *Durham R.M.* on 26 March (Jim Richards).
- △ 2007 One adult (white morph) was found at or near Reesor Pond, Markham, *York R.M.* on 14th Oct (Chris Dunn, Julia M. Dunn) and also seen by Harry Kerr and Jim Griffith, but not reported on ONTBIRDS until 22 Oct (Stan Long). It was subsequently seen and photographed by many observers up to 21 November (last date provided by Stan Long) – see bird report in this issue of *Toronto Birds*.



Adult Ross's Goose (left) foraging with a Snow Goose on **22 October 2007**, Reesor Pond, *York*. Photo © Rick Lauzon

Summary

In total, there have been 19 reports of Ross's Goose in the GTA, of which 16 apply to the OBRC period, and 3 occurred in 2007. Considering the OBRC period only, 10 reports were accepted, 1 was rejected on grounds of uncertain origin (possible escape), and 5 were apparently never submitted to OBRC. There were 6 spring and 9 fall reports (some of which stayed into December), and 4 which were first found in December which likely represent late fall migrants. Given the numbers being reported, we can confidently expect to see many more in the years to come. For 2007 onwards, documentation is still required for local purposes by Toronto Bird Rarities Committee (TBRC), but if the numbers found elsewhere in southern Ontario during the fall of 2007 are any indication (7 reports involving about 8 birds, as of 30 November 2007), TBRC may also be able to consider delisting it in a few years' time. However, the reports still lacking documentation should be dealt with first and we urge any observers, even if not the finders, to document them. The nagging question of hybrids remains, hence observers of any juvenile bird are requested to try and get definitive photographs of the head, nape and upperparts, and to document such sightings comprehensively.

Acknowledgements

Table 1 was based on information from the TOC database, and various OBRC reports since 1989. Of course, the initial finders of these birds, and those who took the trouble to document them, deserve much credit, since it is only as a result of their efforts that a summary such as this becomes possible. Special thanks to Glenn Coady, Chris Escott, Rick Lauzon and Frank Pinilla for permission to use their photographs; and Glenn Coady for reviewing this article.

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