



# TORONTO BIRDS

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*Winnie Poon and Roy Smith*



## COVER PHOTO

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**Barred Owl** (*Strix varia*)

*Photo © Valerie Jacobs*

This image of the Barred Owl in a winter wonderland was taken at Lynde Shores, Whitby, *Durham*, January 2005.

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### **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, artwork and current photos for use in illustrating the bird report. Please send contributions in jpeg format to Winnie Poon [winniepoon@sympatico.ca](mailto:winniepoon@sympatico.ca) including date, location, subject, 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](mailto:worth@pathcom.com) with a copy to Roy Smith [rsmith@mrs.com](mailto:rsmith@mrs.com). Bird observation records should be sent to Roy Smith. All submissions are subject to review and editing.

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## GREATER TORONTO AREA BIRD REPORT – NOVEMBER 2008

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The following are largely unchecked reports, not authenticated records. County/Region codes used in the *database* are: MT = City of Toronto; HL = Halton R.M.; PL = Peel R.M.; YO = York R.M.; DU = Durham R.M.; LO = Lake Ontario Pelagic, but full names are provided in the Report, except for locations within City of 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: HRF, 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 documentation and 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.

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**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** - 1 at Wilfrid Bog, *Durham* on 6<sup>th</sup> (MH,Angela Kingsley, fide ONTBIRDS) was seen with 700 Canada Geese. It was seen again there at 11:30hrs on 8<sup>th</sup> (MH fide ONTBIRDS) & at 13:30hrs on 10<sup>th</sup> (Pete Kyna,Micha Jackson, fide ONTBIRDS). [No doc seen].

SNOW GOOSE - 1 at Baseline Rd 3km W of Sutton, *York* on 5<sup>th</sup>, 1 at Jackman's Point, L. Simcoe, *York* on 6<sup>th</sup> (Greg Jaski fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 (white) AD there on 8<sup>th</sup> (RJF fide ONTBIRDS). 1 (blue) at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup>, 4 (2 white, 2 blue) on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2 (blue) there on 30<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 2 (blue) at Halls Rd., *Durham* on 14<sup>th</sup> (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Willow Beach, *York* on 16<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> (Michele Potter fide RJF). 1 (white) AD at Reesor Road Ponds, *York* on 25<sup>th</sup> (SLo fide ONTBIRDS).

CAACKLING (RICHARDSON'S) GOOSE - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 2 there on 29<sup>th</sup> (anon fide JDL, fide DRBA).

CANADA GOOSE - 700 at Wilfrid Bog, *Durham* on 6<sup>th</sup> (MH,Angela Kingsley, fide ONTBIRDS).

MUTE SWAN - 36 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL), 29 there on 8<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&) & 39 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

TRUMPETER SWAN - 2 (tagged) at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 17<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 5 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu) and 2 (E21 and E27) at HBP (W) on 29<sup>th</sup> (Frank Butson fide OUTON).

TUNDRA SWAN - 11 at south end of Lake Drive, Keswick, *York* on 26<sup>th</sup> (KDu fide RJF).

WOOD DUCK - 1 M at Country Glen Pond, Markham Bypass E of 9th Line, *York* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS,WP).

GADWALL - 47 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS) & 34 at HBP [E] on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP). 132 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 29 (at Baselands) on 5<sup>th</sup>, 152 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> & 81 there on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

AMERICAN WIGEON - 10 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 11 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 27 on 8<sup>th</sup> & 21 there on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 82 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS) & 27 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - 26 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS) & 32 at LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

MALLARD - 200 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

NORTHERN SHOVELER - 14 at Cell #1, LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP) & 67 at Grenadier Pond, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC).

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NORTHERN PINTAIL - 16 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS) & 25 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide DRBA). 5 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (AA) & 30 at Pumphouse Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup> (RPye fide DRBA).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - 18 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> & 19 there on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 33 at Mimico Creek Mouth, HBP on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP) & 5 there on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

CANVASBACK - 19 flying over at Peninsula C, LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

REDHEAD - 100 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL) & 73 there on 8<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 175 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

GREATER SCAUP - 1200 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 600 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 1000 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 750 on 16<sup>th</sup> & 1000 there on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&). 2000 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 250 at Cook's Bay (S End), off Keswick, *York* on 29<sup>th</sup> (NMu,ICa).

LESSER SCAUP - 2 at Cell #3, LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS).

**KING EIDER** - 2 (1 1W-M, 1 F) at SE Tip, LSS on 22<sup>nd</sup> [No doc. seen] (NMu,&).

HARLEQUIN DUCK - 1 M at HBP [E] on 8<sup>th</sup> (AK fide ONTBIRDS). 1 F at Ben Machree Park, *Peel* @ 14:00hrs on 8<sup>th</sup> (John Crawford,GC, fide ONTBIRDS) was last seen moving E towards Port Credit.

BLACK SCOTER - 2 at Peninsula B, LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu). 1 at Petticoat Creek C.A. (mouth of Rouge R), *Durham* on 15<sup>th</sup> (JFa fide DRBA).

LONG-TAILED DUCK - 839 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP) 1500 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2500 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 3700 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 7500 on 16<sup>th</sup> & 2000 there on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&).

BUFFLEHEAD - 52 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 113 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 54 (at Baselands) on 5<sup>th</sup>, 391 on 8<sup>th</sup> & 309 on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

COMMON GOLDENEYE - 258 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 750 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 250 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 1000 on 12<sup>th</sup> & 350 on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&).

HOODED MERGANSER - 61 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 92 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 212 on 8<sup>th</sup>, (NMu,&), 25 on 9<sup>th</sup> (LF fide ONTBIRDS), 46 on 12<sup>th</sup> & 50 on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu). 12 at HBP [E] on 8<sup>th</sup> (AK fide ONTBIRDS, 14 on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP) & 26 there on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu). 3 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP), 13 at Grenadier Pond, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC) & 6 there on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu). 2 at Resources Road Ravine (Humber R) on 16<sup>th</sup> (MK fide ONTBIRDS) & 6 at Lake Wilcox, *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (RJF).

COMMON MERGANSER - 11 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 26 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 75 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 31 on 12<sup>th</sup> & 50 on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL). 33 at Lake Wilcox, *York* on 23<sup>th</sup> (RJF).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - 500 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 400 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 2500 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 2000 on 16<sup>th</sup> & 1000 on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&).

RUDDY DUCK - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS).

RUFFED GROUSE – 3 at Beaverton Valley, Sunderland, *Durham* on 8<sup>th</sup> (RDJ).

WILD TURKEY – 14 at Halls Lake & Mt. Wolfe Rd., *Peel* on 12<sup>th</sup> (GCam) [Brydon 2008]. 3 at Halls Rd./Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 19<sup>th</sup>, 4 on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS). 10 at Hwy 48 & Hwy 12, *Durham* on 29<sup>th</sup> (NMu,ICa).

RED-THROATED LOON - 2 at Tip, LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&). 1 flying over at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 12<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS).

**PACIFIC LOON** - 1 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> [No doc. seen] (NMu,ICa,MVL) was seen flying W low over the Causeway.

COMMON LOON - 5 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&) and 6 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (IMDF fide OUTON). 8 at Oshawa Harbour, *Durham* on 8<sup>th</sup> (J. McKnight fide DRBA) & 1 flying S at Hawk Hill, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC).

PIED-BILLED GREBE - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide DRBA) & 1 at CSSP on 30<sup>th</sup> (AA).

RED-NECKED GREBE - 1 at Mossington Bridge, L. Simcoe, *York* on 7<sup>th</sup> (KDu fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at SE Tip, LSS on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&) and 23<sup>rd</sup> (Andrew McKinley fide OUTON), & 3 at CSSP on 30<sup>th</sup> (AA).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT - 1 at HBP [E] @ 15:00hrs on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP) was missing entire outer part of left wing (severed at the carpal joint).

GREAT BLUE HERON - 1 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL) & on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&). 1 at Reesor Road Ponds, *York* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS,WP), 1 at Lynde Shores C. A., *Durham* on 7<sup>th</sup> (NMacd), 4 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP) & 2 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA). 1 at Cawthra-Mulock FON Reserve, *York* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Amos Ponds, *Durham* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (ETB fide DRBA) & 1 at Mimico Creek Mouth, HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - 1 JUV at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 1 at Scott's Marsh, Whitby, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA), 2 IMM at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 9<sup>th</sup> (RBHS,WP) & 1 IMM at Mimico Creek Mouth, HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

TURKEY VULTURE – 12 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide DRBA) & 1 at Gibb St, Oshawa, *Durham* on 3<sup>rd</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA).

OSPREY - 1 (late) at Pine Point Park on 1<sup>st</sup> (MK,Ellie Kubisz, fide ONTBIRDS).

BALD EAGLE - 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide DRBA), 1 AD at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 15<sup>th</sup> (R. Stephenson fide DRBA) & 1 AD at Willow Beach, *York* on 20<sup>th</sup> (Lorena Campbell fide RJF). One juv. at Kingston Rd & Main St on 22<sup>nd</sup> (Ann Brokelman fide OUTON).

NORTHERN HARRIER - 2 at Tip, LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&) & 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd., *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (Joyce Collier-Brown fide ONTBIRDS).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK - 18 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). Singles at Kortright C. A., *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS), LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> AA), at Cawthra-Mulock FON Reserve, *York* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS) & at Metro Rd, nr. Keswick, *York* on 29<sup>th</sup> (NMu,ICa).

COOPER'S HAWK - Singles at Kortright C. A., *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS), Resources Road Ravine on 16<sup>th</sup> (MK fide ONTBIRDS) & at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 18<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN GOSHAWK - 1 AD-M at Hawk Hill, HP on 1<sup>st</sup> (NMu), 1 IMM at Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (GCarp fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> & on 22<sup>nd</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). Singles at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK -19 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> & 1 there on 12<sup>th</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 12 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-TAILED HAWK - 137 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> & 18 on 18<sup>th</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 174 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup>, 53 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12 on 17<sup>th</sup> & 52 there on 18<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK – 8 reports from Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* beginning with 2 on 1<sup>st</sup>, high count of 5 on 16<sup>th</sup> & last report was of 4 on 30<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 7 reports from Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* beginning with 4 on 1<sup>st</sup>, other high count of 4 on 9<sup>th</sup> & last report was of 2 on 30<sup>th</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at S end of Keswick, *York* & 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. on 8<sup>th</sup> (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS).

GOLDEN EAGLE -13 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). Equals previous 1-day high count for this site; but that was not documented. [Would be a new RECORD COUNT for GTA, if documented]. 8 other reports from this site from 7<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> consisted of 1 or 2 birds & a high count of 3 on the 12<sup>th</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide DRBA) & 1 at Gibb St, Oshawa, *Durham* on 17<sup>th</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA). 1 at Bathurst N of Morning SR, *York* on 12<sup>th</sup> (BB) [Brydon 2008].

MERLIN - 1 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu). & at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide DRBA). 1 (resident) at Gibb St, Oshawa, *Durham* on 7<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA).

PEREGRINE FALCON - 1 AD-M at Peninsula X, LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1 AD-M on 8<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&) & 2 (1 AD, 1 1Y) there on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Clarica Centre, Islington on 23<sup>rd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> (SCH).

AMERICAN COOT - 1 at Triangle Pond, LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS), 5 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS), 1 on 8<sup>th</sup> & 1 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide DRBA). 21 at Corner Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup> (DW) & 3 at HBP on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

SANDHILL CRANE - 30+ flying over at Queen & McLaughlin, Brampton, *Peel* @ 11:30hrs on 18<sup>th</sup>. They were seen moving W, taking some time to circle and gain altitude and flying in V formation, calling. Another flock was heard only as it was moving W out of sight there at 12:05hrs (Maril Semph fide ONTBIRDS). 2 flying over Rosetta McClain Gardens at 13:15h on 22<sup>nd</sup> (Frank Butson fide OUTON), and 3 at Halls Rd., *Durham* on 29<sup>th</sup> (R. Stephenson fide DRBA). They were feeding in field on W side; flew off W at 11:30hrs.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER - 1 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA).

KILLDEER - 1 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA); 1 at Mimico Creek, HBP 27-30<sup>th</sup>, stayed into December (GC).

**AMERICAN AVOCET** - 1 1W at Carruthers Creek Marsh, *Durham* on 12<sup>th</sup> (Sheila King and Gerry C. fide Siegmars Bodach, fide ONTBIRDS). This bird was then reported at the Mouth of Duffin's Creek, *Durham* from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> (RPye; m.obs). It was seen chasing minnows in shallow water at creek outlet and was identified as a female based on bill shape. After not being seen for a few days it turned up again there from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> (m.obs), but then went missing for the remainder of the month [however see December report]. Photographs were obtained by RPye on 16<sup>th</sup>, CMH on 16<sup>th</sup> (OFO website), GLKJ on 17<sup>th</sup> (OFO website), JI on 23<sup>rd</sup> (see [www.jeaniron.ca/Shorebirds/2008/americanavocet.htm](http://www.jeaniron.ca/Shorebirds/2008/americanavocet.htm)) and no doubt many others.



**American Avocet** at Mouth of Duffin's Creek, *Durham*, 16 November 2008. Photo © Rayfield Pye.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS - 1 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA), 5 at Mouth of Duffin's Creek, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup> (DW), 1 at Peninsula B, LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 3 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 15<sup>th</sup> (R. Stephenson fide DRBA).

SANDERLING - 12 at Whitby Harbour (beach W of breakwall), *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA).

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - 1 at Frenchman's Bay, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (DW fide DRBA).

PURPLE SANDPIPER - 1 at Tip, LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL). 4 at SE Tip, LSS on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&), 2 there originally; joined by 2 more seen flying past off the lighthouse.

DUNLIN - 4 at Frenchman's Bay, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (DW fide DRBA).

WILSON'S SNIPE - 2 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA).

HERRING GULL - 200 at Cherry Beach on 12<sup>th</sup> & 169 at LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - 1 1W at LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu), 1 at Liverpool Road, *Durham* on 14<sup>th</sup> (JFa fide DRBA) & 1 at Major Mackenzie & McNaughton, *York* on 29<sup>th</sup> (AA).

GLAUCOUS GULL - 1 at Lake Ontario off Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & 3 (2 AD, 1 1W) at Toronto Harbour (Foot of York St) @ 09:09hrs on 24<sup>th</sup> (FP fide ONTBIRDS).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 12<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

MOURNING DOVE - 53 at a stormwater pond at Yonge & Hwy 7, *York* on 30<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

EASTERN SCREECH-OWL - 1 (gray morph) at Wendigo Way Ravine, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC).

GREAT HORNED OWL - 1 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL), 1 on 8<sup>th</sup> (AA), 3 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 5 on 16<sup>th</sup> & 2 on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&). 1 at Thicksons Woods, *Durham* on 8<sup>th</sup> (RPye fide DRBA).

SNOWY OWL – In *Toronto* there were 2 at LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu, &) and 1 there (seen at long range) on 17<sup>th</sup> (Mathieu Siol fide OUTON); 1 at Greenwood and Mortimer, E. *York* at 09:30h on 23<sup>rd</sup> (EO'C fide OUTON), and 1 at Scarborough Town Centre on 30<sup>th</sup>, where it was chased off by an aggressive Peregrine (anon fide OUTON). In *Durham*, there were singles at Uxbridge area on 4<sup>th</sup> (J. Clegg fide DRBA), at Halls Rd. on 11<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), at Whitby Harbour on 13<sup>th</sup> (JFa fide DRBA) & on 15<sup>th</sup> (R. Stephenson fide DRBA), plus 1 (prob. 1Y-M) at Westside Marsh (59 Cedar Crest Beach Rd) on 25<sup>th</sup> (R. McIver fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Bronte Harbour, *Halton* on 15<sup>th</sup> (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 seen dead on road at Hwy 407 off ramp to Hwy 403, *Halton* on 18<sup>th</sup> (Maril Semph fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at CCIW-Centre for Inland Waters, *Halton* on 19<sup>th</sup> (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 AD-M at 195 Strawberry Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS), 3 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd., *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (BB,KDu, fide RJF) & 1 there on 29<sup>th</sup> (NMu,ICa). 1 at Burloak & Harvester, Oakville, *Halton* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (Andy Morgan fide ONTBIRDS).

**NORTHERN HAWK OWL** - 1 first reported at Baselands, LSS @ 13:50hrs on 8<sup>th</sup> [Documented] (AA fide ONTBIRDS) was seen about 100m N of the checkpoint, on W side of spine road. It was still there the next day and was seen along the road into the Yacht Club, mostly up on hydro wires (m.obs). However, it was not found on 10<sup>th</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS), nor subsequently.

BARRED OWL - 1 at Deer Park Rd, Georgina, *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (KDu), a photo of this bird in WHNC Newsletter, Nov 2008 p.2.

LONG-EARED OWL - 1 at LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

BOREAL OWL - 1 at LSS on 9<sup>th</sup> (LF fide ONTBIRDS) & on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 6<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> & 4 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

\* RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - 1 F at Harris Ave, Oshawa, *Durham* on 3<sup>rd</sup> (Leslie Sayer fide RPye). It was seen feeding very frequently, usually starting about 06:40hrs. It was last seen there on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> [Believed to be record late for *Durham* R.M.]. *Doc. required after 15 Oct.*

BELTED KINGFISHER - Singles at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 8<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER - 1 at Hawk Hill, HP on 1<sup>st</sup> (NMu), 1 F at Kortright C. A., *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Werry Rd, nr Solina, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> (N. Miller fide DRBA). 1 at Humber Station Rd &



Castlederg, *Peel* on 6<sup>th</sup> (PG) [Brydon 2008]. 1 F at Montsell Ave, Willow Beach, *York* on 7<sup>th</sup> (Lorena Campbell fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS) & at 1 at HP on 11<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> (SMF). 1 at 72 Glenmount Park Rd, Scarb. on 24<sup>th</sup> (DSHil).

NORTHERN FLICKER - 1 at Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, *Durham* on 19<sup>th</sup> (GCarp fide DRBA).

PILEATED WOODPECKER - 1 at Kortright C. A., *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN SHRIKE – Singles at Overland Drive Rail Trail on 2<sup>nd</sup> (BF), Ritson Rd & Conc.6, Oshawa, *Durham* on 8<sup>th</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA) & at W. End Ravenshoe Rd., *York* on 15<sup>th</sup> (BB fide RJF). 1 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at LSS on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,& fide ONTBIRDS), and 23<sup>rd</sup> (Andrew McKinley fide OUTON). 1 at Major Mackenzie & CPR, *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (GDe), 1 at HBP [E] on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 1 at Kortright C. A., *York* on 29<sup>th</sup> (AA).

\* WHITE-EYED VIREO - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 8<sup>th</sup> (HC fide DRBA) [No doc. seen] & 1 at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side), *Halton* on 28<sup>th</sup> (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS) [No doc. seen]. *Doc. required after 31 Oct.*

BLUE-HEADED VIREO - 1 (late) at Colonel Butler Dr, Markham, *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (BKM fide GC).

\* RED-EYED VIREO - 1 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> [No doc. seen] (AA fide ONTBIRDS). *Doc required after 31 Oct.*

COMMON RAVEN - 1 heard at Durham RF - Main Tract, *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS,WP) & 1 at Hwy 48 & Hwy 12, *Durham* on 29<sup>th</sup> (NMu,ICa).

HORNED LARK - 15 at Resources Road Ravine on 16<sup>th</sup> (MK fide ONTBIRDS) and 30+ at Endikement, LSS on 23<sup>rd</sup> (Andrew McKinley fide OUTON).

SWALLOW SP. - 2 at Baselands, LSS @ 08:30hrs on 9<sup>th</sup> (HC), presumably Cave Swallows, but not seen well enough. 1 seen at pier at Bronte Harbour, *Halton* on 15<sup>th</sup> (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS), Cliff or Cave?

BROWN CREEPER - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 8<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

CAROLINA WREN - 1 at Resources Road Ravine on 16<sup>th</sup> (MK fide ONTBIRDS).

WINTER WREN - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 4<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (AA).

MARSH WREN - 1 reported at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET - 1 at Greenwood C.A., *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (WP,RBHS) & 16 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET - 2 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1 on 8<sup>th</sup> & on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD - 2 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (AA fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 9<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 2 at Hillside Trail, Rouge Park on 22<sup>nd</sup> (Ross Lamb fide OUTON).

\* SWAINSON'S THRUSH - 1 at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side), *Halton* on 9<sup>th</sup> [No doc. seen] (MCR). 1 at Oshawa Creek, N of Rossland Rd, *Durham* on 20<sup>th</sup> [No doc. seen] (THo fide DRBA). *Doc. required after 31 Oct.*



Yellow-rumped Warbler, Leslie Street Spit, Toronto, 1 November 2008.  
Photo © Winnie Poon.



HERMIT THRUSH - 1 at HBP [W] on 27<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

AMERICAN ROBIN - 75 flying over at Hawk Hill, HP on 1<sup>st</sup> (NMu), 240 at Shell Park, *Halton* on 8<sup>th</sup> (GC) & 17 at Bethesda SR, *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (RJF).

GRAY CATBIRD - 1 at South Trail/Platform, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 19<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD – only 17 reports this month, with 7 from *Toronto*, 8 from *York*, and 2 from *Durham*. November is often a poor month for reports, with many birds having departed, and others moving to winter territories, while birder activity is typically reduced as well. Thanks to the 14 contributors: AA; GDe; BF; Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS; SCH; GEL fide RBHS; JLo fide BB; JMack; NMu; WP; RPye fide DRBA; DRuch; Kevin Seymour; RBHS.

AMERICAN PIPIT 25 at LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (IDMF fide OUTON), and 14 flying W over Rouge Park on 22<sup>nd</sup> (Ross Lamb fide OUTON).

CEDAR WAXWING - 50 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 26 at Kortright C. A., *York* on 29<sup>th</sup> (AA).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER - 1 at SE Tip, LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (RBHS,WP), 1 at Peninsula D, LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 2 there on 8<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Colborne Lodge, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT - 1 at J.C. Saddington Park, *Peel* on 12<sup>th</sup> (anon fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at North Trail/Platform, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 16<sup>th</sup> (JFa fide DRBA).

**SUMMER TANAGER** - 1 1W-M at 181 Maple Ave, Richmond Hill, *York* from 20th to 23<sup>rd</sup> (GEL fide GDe). It was coming to a feeder and eating sunflower seeds. Photos on file. Reported as a 1st winter M (possibly a F).



The **Summer Tanager** at Richmond Hill, *York*, 22 November 2008. Traces of orange-red on the uppertail coverts, vent, and particularly the edge of a single primary, confirmed that the bird was a first-winter male. Photo © Rod Potter.

EASTERN TOWHEE - 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on several dates from 7<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> & 2 there on 9<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 at Oshawa Creek, N of Rossland Rd, *Durham* from 12<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> (THo fide DRBA).

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW - 19 at LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 18 on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

CHIPPING SPARROW - 1 at Greenwood C.A., *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (WP, RBHS). One at 104 Hadrian Dr, Etobicoke from 8-30<sup>th</sup> was seen irregularly at a feeder (MK fide ONTBIRDS). It stayed into December (q.v.)

FOX SPARROW - 1 at LSS on 1<sup>st</sup> (WP, RBHS), 8 at Kortright C. A., *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS) & several at Idleswift Dr, Thornhill, *York* from 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> (GDe).

SONG SPARROW - 17 at Peninsula B, LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

SWAMP SPARROW - Singles at HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC), Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS) & at Kortright C. A., *York* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW – A few at Idleswift Dr, Thornhill, *York* from 1<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> (GDe). 1 at LSS on 9<sup>th</sup> (LF fide ONTBIRDS), 2 at Canada Life, University Ave. on 18<sup>th</sup> (RBHS) & 5 at HP on 29<sup>th</sup> (SMF). 1 reported on 5 dates from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> at South Trail/Platform, Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - 1 IMM at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* from 8<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 JUV at Peninsula B, LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 1 IMM at Devald St, Holland Marsh, *York* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (RJP, MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS).



Female **Dark-eyed Junco** at Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, 1 November 2008.  
Photo © Winnie Poon.

DARK-EYED JUNCO – 54 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu, ICa, MVL).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR - 9 at Tip, LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&) and 1 at Endikement, LSS on 22<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,&).

SNOW BUNTING - 1 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (AA) and ~30 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (IDMF fide OUTON). 200 at Strawberry Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (RJF, MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS), 50 (in 2 flocks) at W. End Ravenshoe Rd., *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (Joyce Collier-Brown fide ONTBIRDS) & 300 there on 29<sup>th</sup> (NMu, ICa).

DICKCISSEL - 1 at Tip, LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> [No doc. seen] (NMu,&) was flying W and calling.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD - 750 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 1500 at Tip, LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 1 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 7<sup>th</sup> (NMacd) & 5 at Grenadier Pond, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC).

EASTERN MEADOWLARK - 2 at S end Hall's Rd., *Durham* on 4<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Baselands, LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - 2 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (AA), 250 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 100 (with Red-winged Blackbirds) at Tip, LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 11 reports from Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* beginning with 1 on 5<sup>th</sup>, a high count of 11 on 20<sup>th</sup> and still 4 there on 30<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS).

COMMON GRACKLE - 250 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu).

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD - 50 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 175 (undercounted) at Tip, LSS on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

PURPLE FINCH - 8 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (ISRW fide MDW, fide ONTBIRDS). 5 at Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (GCarp fide ONTBIRDS), 3 M at Kortright C. A., *York* on 1<sup>st</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS) & 38 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL). 1 F at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 11<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 2 on 23<sup>rd</sup> (RPye fide DRBA) & 1 there on 24<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide DRBA).

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL - The number of reports this month provides graphic evidence of the scale of the irruption that we are witnessing. In *Durham*, there were 3 at Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax on 1<sup>st</sup> (GCarp fide ONTBIRDS), 6 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A. on 1<sup>st</sup> (AA), 1 M at Durham RF - Main Tract on 2<sup>nd</sup> (RBHS,WP) and 12 at Leakard on 7<sup>th</sup> (JKa fide DRBA). 8 reports from Cranberry Marsh/Hall's Rd. area began with 12 on 4<sup>th</sup>, included highs of 35 on 17<sup>th</sup>, 40 on 22<sup>nd</sup> & highest and last report was of 90 (in 3 flocks) on 29<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS). In *York*, there were 20 at Jokers Hill on 1<sup>st</sup> (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) and 80 (in flocks up to 20) at Kortright C. A. on 1<sup>st</sup>, with 56 there on 22<sup>nd</sup> (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS) & 12 there on 29<sup>th</sup> (AA). In addition, one was at Bathurst N of Morning SR on 12<sup>th</sup> (BB) and 30+ at Major Mackenzie & Hwy 27 on 22<sup>nd</sup> (JLo) [both Brydon 2008]. Within the *City of Toronto* the only report was of 9 at LSS on 12<sup>th</sup> (NMu). Others were found in *Peel* and *Halton*, with 50+ at Bronte Creek P.P. (W side), *Halton* on 5<sup>th</sup> (Bill Morden fide CEdge, fide ONTBIRDS) & 30 there on 27<sup>th</sup> (Michael Veltri fide ONTBIRDS). There were 8 at Mountainview W of Airport Rd, *Peel* on 12<sup>th</sup> (anon fide PG), and 14 at Albion Trail, *Peel* on 22<sup>nd</sup> (GCam) [both Brydon 2008].

COMMON REDPOLL - A small flock at HBP [E] on 8<sup>th</sup> (AK fide ONTBIRDS), 2 at LSS on 8<sup>th</sup> (AA) & 15+ at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> (JDL fide ONTBIRDS). 11 at Hawk Hill, HP on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC), 1 at Resources Road Ravine on 16<sup>th</sup> (MK fide ONTBIRDS), 2 at Gibb St, Oshawa, *Durham* on 17<sup>th</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA) & 8 at Montrave Ave, Oshawa, *Durham* on 24<sup>th</sup> (DRuch fide DRBA).

PINE SISKIN - 30+ at Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (GCarp fide ONTBIRDS), 350 at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> & 40 there on 8<sup>th</sup> (CMRW fide JDL, fide ONTBIRDS). 32 at Iroquois Raptor Platform, Heber Down C. A., *Durham* on 1<sup>st</sup> (AA), 15 at Durham RF - Main Tract, *Durham* & 55 at Greenwood C.A., *Durham* on 2<sup>nd</sup> (WP,RBHS). 175 at LSS on 2<sup>nd</sup> (NMu,ICa,MVL), 70 on 9<sup>th</sup> (LF fide ONTBIRDS) & 24 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&). 3 at Dacre Crescent on 16<sup>th</sup> (GC).

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH - 56 at Baselands, LSS on 5<sup>th</sup> (NMu) & 175 there on 16<sup>th</sup> (NMu,&).

HOUSE SPARROW - 93 at Old 16th & Bayview, *York* on 23<sup>rd</sup> (RBHS).

CITED OBSERVERS: & et al.; ISRW Iroquois Shores Raptor Watch; AA Alfred Adamo; ETB Eleanor Beagan; BB Bruce Brydon; GCam Gord Cameron; ICa Ian Cannell; GCarp Geoff Carpentier; GC Glenn Coady; MCr Mark Cranford; HC Hugh Currie; GDe Gene Denzel; KDu Keith Dunn; CEdge Cheryl Edgecombe; JFa Jim Fairchild; BF Bruce Falls; SMF Steven Favier; LF Luc Fazio; IDMF Iain Fleming; RJF Ron Fleming; JFlo Joachim Floegel; PG Phyllis Graydon; SCH Sandra Hawkins; THo Tyler Hoar; TH Theo Hofmann; MH Matt Holder; RDJ Ross James; GLKJ Gabriel Lau Kin Jock; JKa James Kamstra; AK Andrew Keaveney; MK Mark Kubisz; GEL Graham Leonard; MJL Marcus J. Lise; MVL Margaret Liubavicius; JDL J. Doug Lockrey; SLo Stan Long; JLo Joan Love; NMacd Neil Macdougall; BKM Barry MacKay; JMack Jess Mackenzie; m. obs many observers; CSAM Craig S.A. McLauchlan; NMu Norman Murr; anon Unknown Observer; EO'C Ed O'Connor; ONTBIRDS OFO Email Hotline; OUTON OutdoorOntario.net; FP Frank Pinilla; RJP Ron Pittaway; WP Winnie Poon; RPye Rayfield Pye; CMRW Cranberry Marsh Raptor Watch; DRBA Durham Rare Bird Alert; DRuch Dave Ruch; DShil David Shilman; RBHS Roy B. H. Smith; MvdT Mike Van Den Tillaart; MDW Mike Williamson; DW David Worthington.

#### REFERENCES:

Brydon, Bruce. 2008. October 2008 – November 2008 Sightings. WHNC Newsletter, December 2008:3-4.

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Compiled by Dave Worthington for the TOC Records Committee.

Photo editing by Winnie Poon.

Data entry by Roy Smith. 636 reports were added to the database for November 2008.

Please send reports to: Roy Smith 20 Harding Blvd. W, Suite 1002, Richmond Hill, ON L4C 9S4. Tel: 905-508-4045 Fax: 905-508-4730 email: [rsmith@mrs.com](mailto:rsmith@mrs.com) by 8<sup>th</sup> of the following month, please. Send photos for possible use in the bird report to: [winniepoon@sympatico.ca](mailto:winniepoon@sympatico.ca), following guidelines on 2<sup>nd</sup> page of this journal.

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## NOTE

### Records of Northern Hawk Owl in the Greater Toronto Area

*Winnie Poon and Roy Smith*

The Northern Hawk Owl is a rare and irregular winter visitor in southern Ontario, and an occasional rare breeder in northern parts of this region such as the Ottawa Valley and Manitoulin Island. Their southward movements are generally thought to be influenced by the availability of their winter food, small mammals such as voles and lemmings, in their breeding range.

In the TOC Database, there are currently 47 reports of Northern Hawk Owl occurrences in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) since 1886. Of these one is a second hand report, and two pertain to specimens which are now missing and therefore have not been included in the total count of records. Most of these reports came from Durham (20), with many fewer from Halton (4), Peel (6), Toronto (11) and York (6). The earliest Northern Hawk Owl record in the GTA was a specimen obtained in *Toronto* by Thomas McIlwraith, 5 December 1886 (Table 1). This specimen eventually went to the Royal Ontario Museum as part of the Fleming bequest. Although some of the earliest historical reports were listed as 'Toronto', it should be noted that they may have referred to locations outside the current city limits

In the winter of 1962-63, a large irruption of Northern Hawk Owls occurred in southern Ontario. Woodford (1963) stated that "Beginning in mid-October [1962], there has been the largest influx of Hawk Owls into southern Ontario since 1918-1919". According to Goodwin there were "well over 100 reports (including some duplication) received..." (Goodwin 1963). During that irruption, 11 were found in the Kingston region (Weir 1989). In the GTA, four Northern Hawk Owls were seen in *Durham*, plus others in *Halton* (1), *Peel* (3), *York* (2), and *Toronto* (1). Interestingly, in the same winter, an irruption of Boreal Owls also took place (Tozer and Richards 1974). Another small influx of Northern Hawk Owls occurred in the GTA at end of 1996 when single birds were found in *Peel*, *York* and *Durham*.

The big irruption of 1962-1963 yielded some surprising nuggets in the literature. For example, Cruickshank's summary of the 1962 Christmas Bird Counts across North America (Cruickshank 1963) included the statement that: "*There were at least 10 Hawk Owls within the city limits of Toronto*". He was probably quoting Woodford (1963), who had also mentioned this, however, individual records in the database (based on the TOC Record Books) do not support such an assertion. Perhaps Woodford had access to reports which never reached the TOC? On further investigation, an old report of the TOC Records Committee for 1962-1963 came to light (ROM SC83.4). In here it was stated that "*Hawk Owls, never common even when in their own environment, became rather common when a team of banders from the States collected 6 or 7 of these birds and released them on Rogers Road near another local owl and close to the 5<sup>th</sup> Line and No. 5*



**Northern Hawk Owl**, Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, 9 Nov 2008.  
Photo © Winnie Poon

where 2 others were to be seen". This could account for the ten birds, but the Rogers Road area where the banded ones were ostensibly released is in *Peel*, not *Toronto*, even if these transported, banded birds could have been legitimately counted! This example shows the importance of cross-checking data, comparing multiple sources, and as far as possible, tracing records back to their original sources.

In the interests of timely publication, we have not been able to conduct an exhaustive search of the literature, so the numbers provided in this note must be considered preliminary. No doubt there are other records which we failed to trace, and additional data to be found in materials which are time-consuming to access, such as the individual log books and diaries of certain observers, available in the ROM Special Collections. But just to provide some context, Marcotte (*in Levine 1998*) reported that there were only about 52 records *in total* for New York State (as of 1998), where the exceptional winter of 1962-63 yielded only four state records. It seems that the lower Great Lakes form a fairly effective barrier to irrupting Northern Hawk Owls, and we in southern Ontario are the beneficiaries of this.

Recognizing that the database may be incomplete, the only records we currently have from the *City of Toronto* itself since 1947 involve birds seen as follows: one at Kipling north of Taber Road, Rexdale in December 1957 / Jan 1958, one (possibly two) at Maxome Ave near Finch and Leslie in December 1965 / January 1966, one at Rouge Hills on 1 January 1970, and one on 19 February 1996, seen near Morningside and Hwy 401, Scarborough, by Lionel Dwyer, a bird carver. This report was considered by Bob Yukich as probably reliable. Another twelve years then elapsed until the latest Northern Hawk Owl was found on 8-9 November 2008 at the Leslie Street Spit.

Reports from ONTBIRDS (listserv of Ontario Field Ornithologists), indicate that we are witnessing another irruption of Northern Hawk Owls into southern Ontario this winter (2008-2009). Commencing with the Leslie Street Spit owl, others have been seen in *Ottawa* (two), *Lanark*, *Haliburton*, *Simcoe*, and *Peterborough*, with most of them involving long stays at their respective locations. This seems to have been the typical pattern historically – although there are a few reports of birds seen for one or two days only, the vast majority seem to find a good feeding ground and establish themselves in a fairly small area, where they remain for several weeks or even months. Such reliability is of course most helpful to those seeking this species, as opposed to tracking them down in their remote taiga breeding habitat.

If anyone has additional information on the historic records listed in the table, particularly earlier or later dates, exact knowledge of the finder(s), corrections or clarifications etc., we would welcome it to enhance the database. The table of records is an attempt to condense many individual reports into something more manageable and we recognize that important context may have been overlooked in so doing. Please check your old notebooks and let us know about any errors, omissions or previously unsubmitted reports.

## **Acknowledgements**

We thank Fred Bodsworth for his personal records of Northern Hawk Owl, and drawing attention to some other records. Don Perks provided the exact location for the 1957 record. Mark Peck provided data for GTA specimens in the ROM collection of Northern Hawk Owls. Don Burton and John Lamey helped clarify the data for certain records.

**Table 1. A Preliminary List of GTA Northern Hawk Owl Records 1886 – 2008.**

Date	Location	Region	Observers/Notes
5 December 1886	Toronto	MT	C.K.Worthen(collector), ROM skin# 41904. Ex K.C. McIlwraith collection; ex J.H.Fleming collection. Data from ROM catalogue fide M.K.Peck.
14 April 1889	St. James Cemetery	MT	James R. Thurston. Sight record (Speirs 1985).
22 October 1889	Pickering	DU	E.T.Seton (collector), ROM skin#41882. Ex J.H. Fleming collection. Stomach crammed with field mice. Data from ROM catalogue fide M.K.Peck.
1889 - 1907	Toronto area	MT	J.H.Fleming stated "I have the records of only 3 specimens since 1889..." (Fleming 1907). One specimen is ROM#41882, other two now apparently missing*.
22 December 1929	High Park	MT	Brodie Club CBC; party #5 (Dr.Paul Harrington, R.V. Lindsay, John Townson, W. Owens) (Rutter 1930).
4 December 1944	Pickering	DU	Lawrence Davis. Taken alive, kept in Toronto Zoo until it died on 14 Dec 1945. ROM skin#72986 (Speirs 1976).
January-February 1945	Frenchman's Bay	DU	2 <sup>nd</sup> hand report. Looked for but not found by Richard M. Saunders on 3 Mar (Saunders 1947).*
18 October [ pre1947]	Toronto area	MT	Richard M. Saunders. Listed in his table of spring and fall migration dates, no details (Saunders 1947).
13 January 1955	2 mi E of Locust Hill (Green River/Whitevale area)	DU	Alf Bunker (TOC Record Book #2).
17 December 1957	Kipling north of Taber Rd, Rexdale	MT	Gerry Bennett. Recorded on 22 Dec Toronto 30- mile CBC. Last recorded 16 Mar 1958 (TOC Record Book #3). Exact location fide Don Perks.
19 January 1958	Lake Scugog Causeway East	DU	Harry G. Lumsden (Tozer & Richards 1974).
15 March 1962	Happy Nook, Pickering	DU	Alf Bunker. Later seen by J.L. Baillie at Lot 27, Conc 2 (Speirs 1976).
2 November 1962	Mouth of Holland River	YO	William Robinson. Two birds observed (Devitt 1967).
18 November 1962	Lake Scugog Causeway East	DU	E.W.Calvert. Also seen on 22, 25 Nov (Tozer & Richards 1974).
25 November 1962	Lot 18, Conc 3, Reach Twp.	DU	J. Murray Speirs and Ron Tozer. Also seen on 2, 30 Dec (Tozer & Richards 1974).
9 December 1962	Palermo	HL	Dave West, m.obs. Stayed to 26 Jan 1963 (Curry 2006).
17 December 1962	Rogers Road, Erindale	PL	Kay Barron, Ellen Cuthbert, m.obs. Last seen 26 Mar 1963 (Curry 2006).
23 December 1962	Exact location unknown	YO	anon. Seen on Toronto 30-mile CBC, count week of Central York County [now Richmond Hill] 15-mile CBC 29 Dec (Lunn 1963).
29 December 1962	Lot 33, Conc 2, Darlington Twp.	DU	R. and A. Foster. Last seen 6 Jan 1963 (Tozer & Richards 1974).
1 January 1963	Whitby S. Treatment Plant	DU	George A. Scott (Tozer & Richards 1974).
5 January 1963	Hwy 400, 800m N of Hwy 7	YO	Don Perks (TOC Record Book #3).
26 January 1963	Hwy 5 & 5 <sup>th</sup> Line, Erindale.	PL	Don Perks. Two owls. Also seen later on 10 Feb [Don Gunn] (TOC Record Book #3).
10 February 1963	Lawrence Ave. East	MT	Don Burton (pers. comm).
11 February 1963	Burnhamthorpe Rd. 800m west of Hwy 10	PL	R. McCleary (TOC Record Book #3).
22 December 1963	Sheppard Ave., Pickering	DU	J. Murray Speirs on Toronto 30-mile CBC. Seen again on Pickering 15-mile CBC [26 Dec] at Lot 34, Range 3 (Speirs 1976) and on 10 Jan 1964 (TOC Record Book #3).



1 February 1964	Moore's Road, Pickering	DU	Gerry Norris (Speirs 1976) [see Note 1].
26 December 1964	Church Street near Conc 3, Pickering	DU	George A. Scott, Ron Tozer on Pickering CBC. Seen and photographed by many observers up to 21 Feb 1965. Banded by Gary Page on 30 Jan 1965 (Speirs 1976).
28 December 1965	Leslie Street south of Steeles	MT	John Lamey. Also seen on 10 Jan 1966. One observed a short distance away at Maxome Ave. & Finch, on 4 and 15-16 Jan 1966, said to have been there for a number of weeks, was assumed to be the same bird, last seen 28 Feb 1966 (Iden 1966a, 1966b).
29 January 1966	Cherrywood	DU	J. Millman and W. Cox (Speirs 1976).
28 December 1967	Lake Scugog Causeway East	DU	David D. Calvert (Tozer & Richards 1974).
12 December 1969	Erindale Station Road	PL	Bob Westmore (Curry 2006).
1 January 1970	Rouge Hills	MT	Harry Kerr (Speirs 1976).
11 January 1970	Lot 2, Conc 2, Pickering (Redwing Orchards)	DU	Edgerton Pegg fide J.M. Speirs (Speirs 1976).
18 October 1971	17 Cathedral Bluffs Dr. Scarborough	MT	Peter Sidorchuk fide P.Fleck [colour slide] (TOC Record Book #4).
22 December 1976	Maple Grove area, Bowmanville	DU	E. Single. Seen by many observers up to 9 Mar 1977 (TOC Record Book #5).
2 January 1982	St. Johns SR and Bayview	YO	anon fide Anne MacDonald. Also seen 30 Jan (Data card).
27 March 1982	Cherrywood Dr., Burlington	HL	Leslie and B. Laking (Curry 2006).
30 December 1986	5th Conc, Clarke Twp (E of Orono).	DU	Jim Richards [but found prior to this date]. Also seen 1, 17 Jan 1987, stayed to at least 7 Mar 1987 (Coady 2002).
25 January 1991	North Richvale Greenway, Richmond Hill	YO	Dave Tomlinson fide H.Lumsden. Said to have been present most of Jan. Stayed to 23 Feb (G. Bennett).
5 January 1992	East of Brougham	DU	E. Gribble. Location given as "Salem Rd/ Balsam/ Hwy 7" (Jonak 1992b).
7 November 1992	8th Line north of Derry Road	HL	Ulrich Waterman. It was found dead, killed by a car on 25 Nov (Dobos 1993a; Curry 2006).
10 January 1996	1.5 mile south of Port Perry	DU	Hugh Currie fide Patrick Stepien-Scanlon.
19 February 1996	Morningside and Hwy 401, Scarborough	MT	Lionel Dwyer fide Bob Yukich.
4 December 1996	5581 Enfield Road, east of Oshawa	DU	anon. TOC/Toronto Star Hotline.
4 December 1996	Rutherford Road at McGillivray Road	YO	anon. TOC/Toronto Star Hotline. Stayed to at least 19 Feb 1997.
6 December 1996	Centreville Creek Rd and King SR	PL	Jim Fairchild fide Gerry Bennett. Still seen early Mar 1997 but gone by mid-Mar 1997.
20 January 2003	Guelph Line and Hwy 401	HL	Rich Johnston fide Mark Cranford. Last reported on 8 Feb 2003.
1 February 2005	Hwy 50 and CP rail line area, Bolton	PL	David J. Milsom fide Theo Hofmann. Last reported on 26 Feb 2005.
8 November 2008	Baselands, Leslie Street Spit	MT	Alfred Adamo. Seen again on 9 Nov, not subsequently.

\* These reports not included in the total count.

Key to regions: MT= City of Toronto; DU = Durham R.M.; YO = York R.M.; PL = Peel R.M.; HL = Halton R.M.

Note 1: This location cannot be traced on current map.

In general, the 'best' or most complete reference has been provided, recognizing that many records appear in more than one source publication. For 1989 onwards, the source for records without a literature reference should be considered to be the TOC Database.



Photo showing the **Northern Hawk Owl** in a sleek upright posture. Field studies in Europe have found the Northern Hawk Owl adopting this posture when wary of an aerial or distant ground predator. The owl flattens the plumage to elongate the body and stands erectly, staring at the source of alarm. On two occasions, this sleek upright posture also seemed to appease mobbing birds (Cramp 1985). This strategic posture actually makes the owl look taller, possibly imitating the posture of larger owls like the Great Horned and Great Gray Owl. Would this help to intimidate a predator?

Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, 9 November 2008.  
Photo © Winnie Poon.

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**Northern Hawk Owl** perched in a roadside Russian Olive at Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, 9 November 2008.  
*Photo © Winnie Poon.*



Many birders and photographers enjoyed the Northern Hawk Owl at Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*, 9 November 2008.  
*Photo © Winnie Poon.*

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