



TORONTO BIRDS

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COVER PHOTO

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

Photo © Mark Peck

Three Short-eared Owls were seen during the Royal Ontario Museum Birding Class owl prowl on 8 February 2009. The owls were found roosting in Downsview Park, *Toronto*, a regular wintering site with unusual urban habitat for this species. Other owls observed in the outing in the GTA were three Great Horned Owls (one nominate, and two of the subspecies *scalariventris*), three Long-eared Owls, one Northern Saw-whet Owl, and one Barred Owl.

This photograph was taken by Mark Peck, co-instructor with Glenn Coady, during the field trip.

Produced by the Records Committee Toronto Ornithological Club

Editors:

Glenn Coady glenn_coady@hotmail.com

Roy Smith rsmith@mrs.com

Winnie Poon winniepoon@sympatico.ca

Compiler: Dave Worthington

Database: Roy Smith

Photos & Production: Winnie Poon

Records Councillor: Glenn Coady

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 submissions of notes or articles related to birds in the GTA. We also request potential cover photos, artwork and current photos for use in illustrating the bird report. Please send all contributions, or photos in jpeg format including date, location, subject, and caption if any, to our email address below. Bird observation records should be sent to Roy Smith rsmith@mrs.com. All submissions are subject to review and editing.

Email <torontobirds@sympatico.ca>

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GREATER TORONTO AREA BIRD REPORT – FEBRUARY 2009

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.

Western Grebe – first Ontario winter record



Western Grebe at Ashbridge's Bay *Toronto*, 17 February 2009. The grebe was initially found by Ed O'Connor on 13 February, it became twitchable when refound on 15th by Winnie Poon. The first in winter in Ontario (subject to OBRC acceptance), and possibly the same bird as seen two years ago March –April 2007 at the Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto*. © Jean Iron.

MUTE SWAN - 64 at HBP [W], 10 at CSSP & 7 at Marie Curtis Park all on 14th (SCH).

TRUMPETER SWAN - 11 (incl. 4 juv) at Metro Toronto Zoo on 1st (SCH), only one with tag - #529. 40 at LaSalle Marina,, *Halton* on 1st (NMu,ICa) & 3 (1 w/ tag) at Port Credit Harbour, *Peel* on 1st (RBHS,WP). 11 at HBP [E] on 14th, one without tag; 10 with tags: E21, E27, E72 (juv); E73, E79, E80, 155, 176, 191 (SCH). 2 at Newcastle Marina, *Durham* on 23rd (MJL fide ONTBIRDS).

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - 3 at Holland Landing S.L., *York* on 8th (BB) [Brydon 2009].

MALLARD - 250 at LaSalle Marina, *Halton* on 1st (NMu,ICa) & 404 at Lambton Woods on 15th (SCH).

MALLARD x AMERICAN WIGEON – a bird showing characters of this hybrid was photographed by John Crawford at CSSP on 14th (GC,&).

NORTHERN PINTAIL - 1 at Oshawa Creek, E of Midtown Mall, *Durham* on 10th (S. Pernanen fide DRBA).

REDHEAD - 4 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 7th (Dan Kaczynski fide DRBA).

GREATER SCAUP - 820 at CSSP on 7th (RBHS,WP), 250 on 14th (NMu,ICa) & 95 there on 15th (RBHS,WP). 250 at HBP on 14th (NMu,ICa) & 250 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa).

LESSER SCAUP - 3 at Pipit Point, LSS on 21st (NMu,EO'C,ICa).



A very photogenic male **King Eider** in 1st basic plumage at Colonel Samuel Smith Park, *Toronto*, 8 February 2009. © Iain Fleming.

KING EIDER - 1 F at Burlington Beach Canal, *Halton* on 5th & on 17th (anon fide CEE, fide ONTBIRDS) [no doc. seen]. 1 IMM-M was first reported at CSSP on 6th (Andy Tanas fide ONTBIRDS) and subsequently seen on 7th, 8th, 11th, 13th & 14th (m. obs). It often would sit, with Mallards, on a small shingle beach at E end of the park, providing great close up photo opportunities [photos received from several sources]. 1 F at Pipit Point, LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa) [no doc. seen].

HARLEQUIN DUCK - 1 1W-M at CSSP on 7th (GVR fide ONTBIRDS) & 3 (1 M, 2 F) there on 9th (FP fide ONTBIRDS) & on 14th (GC,GJB;NMu,ICa).



The **King Eider** was often seen resting among mallards on a small shingle beach at the east end of Colonel Samuel Smith Park, *Toronto*, 7 February 2009. © Winnie Poon.

SURF SCOTER - 1 IMM-M at St Lawrence Park, Port Credit, *Peel* on 1st (RBHS,WP) & 2 (1 M, 1 F) at LSS on 21st (Anne-Marie Ferguson fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - 1 at CSSP on 8th (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS) & 3 there on 15th (RBHS,WP). 5 at Burlington Beach Canal, *Halton* on 14th (GC,GJB). 42 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa), 20 on 16th (Andreas Jonsson fide OUTON) & 44 (off the flats) at LSS on 21st (NMu,EO'C,ICa).

LONG-TAILED DUCK - 500 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa) & on 21st (NMu,EO'C,ICa).

BUFFLEHEAD - 1 on Don R at North Toronto Sewage Plant on 7th (ETB).

COMMON GOLDENEYE - 38 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 14th (NMu,ICa).

HOODED MERGANSER - 2 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 14th (NMu,ICa) & on 15th (RBHS,WP). 1 M at LSS on 15th & 21st (NMu, ICa, EO'C).

COMMON MERGANSER - 52 at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 14th (NMu,ICa) & 26 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - 300 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa).

RUDDY DUCK - 1 on Humber R @ Kingsmill Park on 13th (SCH).

RUFFED GROUSE - 1 at Mountainview & Beechgrove SR, *Peel* on 15th (GCam) [Brydon 2009].

WILD TURKEY - 18 at Conc 7 1km E of Westney Rd., *Durham* on 6th (DW fide DRBA). 1 in a backyard at Chine Dr area, Scarborough on 12th (anon fide Frank Butson, fide GC); apparently had been in the area for 6 months according to a homeowner. 4 at Halls Rd., *Durham* on 20th (R. Stephenson fide DRBA) & 44 nr. Bond Head, *Durham* on 23rd (MJL fide ONTBIRDS).

RED-THROATED LOON - 1 at Burlington Beach Canal, *Halton* on 14th (GC,GJB), specifically noted as Halton side.

HORNED GREBE - 1 at HBP on 8th (SMF). 1 at CSSP on 9th (SCH), 3 on 14th (Chris Street fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 there on 16th (SMF).

RED-NECKED GREBE – Singles at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 1st (RPyE fide DRBA), CSSP on 14th (NMu,ICa;GC,GJB) & at Pipit Point, LSS on 21st (NMu,EO'C,ICa).

WESTERN GREBE - One was first reported at Ashbridge's Bay Park @ 15:30hrs on 13th (EO'C fide OUTON). Found about 25-75m offshore, watched for 30mins; 3 photos obtained [Documented]. On the 15th @ 17:15hrs it was relocated by WP about 300m off S shore and 300m E of extreme SW tip. Watched until 17:40hrs as it moved further offshore towards SW, eventually at about 1000m range (WP,RBHS) [Documented]. It was seen again there from 16th to 18th by many observers, but not seen subsequently in Feb, although searched for by a number of people until the 22nd. [However, see March 2009 records].

GREAT BLUE HERON - 1 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 1st (RPyE fide DRBA).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - 3 AD at Lower Don River (Queen St Bridge) on 11th (GCarp,& fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 there on 22nd (RBHS).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK – 7 reports of single birds from different locations from 2nd to 21st of the month.

COOPER'S HAWK – 9 reports from different locations of singles thro' the month. 2 (M & F) were displaying at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, *Durham* on 7th (GCarp fide ONTBIRDS) & 2 were seen flying together at 7 Fairway Dr., Scarb. on 8th (RLau). 2 (M & F) at Riverwood Park, Erindale, *Peel* on 19th (LF, Dan Salisbury, fide ONTBIRDS) & on 21st (LF fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN GOSHAWK - 1 at Frenchman's Bay, *Durham* on 8th (RPye fide DRBA) & 1 JUV at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 20th flew in off the lake! (RHC,GSI, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 IMM at Weston Rd & King-Vaughan Line, *York* on 21st (RJF,RHNC, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Park & Bond St, Oshawa, *Durham* on 27th (THo fide DRBA) & 1 at Hwy 27 & King-Vaughan Line, *York* on 28th (Marion Ford) [Brydon 2009].

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK - 1 at Corner Marsh, *Durham* on 6th & on 13th (DW fide DRBA). 1 at Bronte Marsh, *Halton* on 16th and 21st (both anon fide CEE, fide ONTBIRDS).

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK - 1 (light morph) at Huntington / Langstaff, *York* on 21st (RBHS,WP,RHNC).

MERLIN - 1 at 350 Midwest Rd, Scarb. on 5th (RLau), at #425 Midwest 'It sits on a favourite wooden telephone pole with rotted top, using the cupped top to hold its prey while it eats, the pole has no wiring attached'. 1 at Solina Rd N of Hwy 2, *Durham* on 8th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA), 1 at Park & Gibb St, Oshawa, *Durham* on 8th (DRuch fide DRBA) & 2 at Downsview Park on 8th (GC,&) were in the same roost as the SEOWs and LEOWs. Singles at Aurora Rd & Dufferin St., *York* on 9th (GCam) [Brydon 2009], QEW & Kipling on 14th (NMu,ICa), Garrard & Dryden Ave, Whitby, *Durham* on 17th (anon fide OUTON), Stevenson & Adelaide, Oshawa, *Durham* on 18th & 25th (THo fide DRBA) & at Jane St & Harding Ave. on 22nd (AA). 1 at Centre St, Thornhill, *York* on 22nd (anon fide OUTON) & at Rossland E of Garrard, Whitby, *Durham* on 24th (THo fide OUTON).

PEREGRINE FALCON - 1 AD at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 1st (RPye fide DRBA) & 1 at City Hall, Oshawa, *Durham* on 8th (DRuch fide DRBA). 2 at Clarica Centre, Islington on 13th (SCH) were seen copulating on ledge near the nesting box. 1 heard at Lift Bridge, Burlington Beach Canal, *Halton* on 14th (GC,GJB), 1 at Ontario Food Terminal on 14th (SCH) & 1 at Queen St & University Ave on 24th (LFr). 1 at 18 King St. E. on 24th (Glenn Steplock fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Hopkins St, Whitby, *Durham* on 27th (THo fide DRBA) was seen hunting Rock Pigeons at N end of steel plant.



Iceland Gulls – an immature bird (right) adopting a submissive posture in response to the calling adult (left); Ashbridge's Bay Park, Toronto, 22 February 2009. © Winnie Poon.

RING-BILLED GULL - 580 at HBP on 14th (SCH), 500 at Cherry Beach on 15th (NMu,ICa) & 750 there on 21st (NMu,ICa,EO'C).

THAYER'S GULL - 1 1W at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 17th (FP fide ONTBIRDS).

ICELAND GULL - 1 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 7th (THo fide DRBA) & 4 at Bluffer's Park on 9th (RLau). 9 (7 AD, 2 IW) at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 14th (NMu,ICa), 7 (1 1W, 6 AD) there on 15th (RBHS,WP); 9 on 16th (Andreas Jonsson fide OUTON), 7 on 17th (FP fide ONTBIRDS) & 5 (3 1W, 1 3W, 1AD) there on 22nd (RBHS,WP).

GLAUCOUS GULL - 1 at Frenchman's Bay, *Durham* on 8th (RPye fide DRBA), 1 at Whitby Harbour, *Durham* on 8th (RPye fide DRBA) & 2 at Bluffer's Park on 9th (RLau). 3 1W at Ashbridge's Bay Park on 14th (NMu,ICa) & 1 1W there on 17th (FP fide ONTBIRDS).

ROCK PIGEON - 702 at Burnhamthorpe & Dundas area on 13th (SCH).

EASTERN SCREECH-OWL - 1 at Riverwood Park, Erindale, *Peel* on 13th (GVR fide ONTBIRDS) was seen roosting on a porch light under eaves. 1 at Old Mill (Humber River/Bloor) on 16th (SCH) & 1 at Bathurst N of Queensville SR, *York* on 21st (Robin Lawson) [Brydon 2009].

GREAT HORNED OWL - 1 at Thicksons Woods, *Durham* on 1st (DBar fide ONTBIRDS), on 8th (GC,&) & on 14th (RPye fide DRBA). 2 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa), 1 on 16th (Andreas Jonsson fide OUTON) & 3 there on 21st (MAB,& fide Michael's Bull. #382). Singles at Bessborough Dr, Oshawa, *Durham* on 15th (THo fide DRBA), North Hill, *Peel* on 16th (anon fide PG) [Brydon 2009], *Durham* RF - Main Tract, *Durham* on 19th (D. Connelly fide DRBA) & heard at Bathurst N of Queensville SR., *York* on 21st (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS).



One of two more **Snyder's Great Horned Owl** at Darlington Provincial Park, *Durham*, 8 February 2009. At least 5 birds of this subspecies have been reported this winter in the GTA. © Mark Peck.

"SNYDER'S" GREAT HORNED OWL - 2 at Darlington Prov. Park, *Durham* on 8th (GC,MKP,&) good photos obtained by MKP. 2 at LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa) & 1 there on 21st (Colin Marciano fide OUTON).

SNOWY OWL - 1 (F-type) was photographed at LSS on 1st (Bernie Monette fide OFO-W), 2 M were seen at Endikement, LSS on 15th (NMu,ICa) & 1 M there on 21st (NMu,ICa,EO'C). 1 seen at CSSP on 7th, 8th, 10th, 14th & 15th (m. obs), it was quite heavily barred and was often seen sitting on marina docks. 1 at Hwy 2 & Green Rd, Bowmanville, *Durham* from 16th to 18th (P. Hogen-birk fide DRBA). 1 at Aileen St, Holland Marsh, *York* & 3 at Woodchoppers Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* on 14th (RjF,MvdT,fide ONTBIRDS). 1 AD at Wist Rd, Holland Marsh, *York* & 1 (F or imm. M) at Woodchopper's Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* on 16th (AA). 1 M at Woodchoppers Lane, Holland Marsh, *York*, 2 (F/imm) at Strawberry Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* & 1 1W-F at Keele N of King Rd, Holland Marsh, *York* on 21st (RjF,RHNC, fide ONTBIRDS). 1 (pure white) at Woodchoppers Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* on 28th (DW).

BARRED OWL - 1 at Darlington Prov. Park, *Durham* on 8th (GC,&).



Two **Short-eared Owls** at Downsview Park, *Toronto*, 8 February 2009. © Mark Peck.

* **GREAT GRAY OWL** - 1 at Bathurst N of Queensville SR, *York* on 14th (Dan Stuckey fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS), on 21st (Lev Frid fide ONTBIRDS) & again there on 22nd (AA). [Photos on file].

LONG-EARED OWL - 1 at Thicksons Woods, *Durham* on 1st (DBar fide ONTBIRDS) & on 8th (GC,&). 2 at Downsview Park on 8th (GC,&).

SHORT-EARED OWL - 3 at Downsview Park on 8th (GC,&) & 1 (calling) there on 22nd (AA).

BOREAL OWL - 1 at Ghost Road Bush, *Durham* on 11th (Bill Teskey fide RPy, fide DW); he has checked this area all winter, but seen one day only.

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL – The remains of one (wing and a few feathers) were found at the foot of a Great Horned Owl roosting tree at Thicksons Woods, *Durham* on 1st (DBar fide ONTBIRDS); it had been there since the fall. 1 at 16th SR E of Kelly Lake, *York* on 3rd (Ann Love) [Brydon 2009]. 1 was photographed at Darlington Park Rd @ Courtice, *Durham* on 4th (Larry Kirtley fide OFO-W). 1 at Corner Marsh, *Durham* on 6th & 13th (DW). 1 at Lynde Shores C. A., *Durham* on 8th (GC,&) & photographed there on 22nd (John Holcroft fide OFO-W). 2 at Ghost Road Bush, *Durham* on 11th (Bill Teskey fide RPy, fide DW) had been present since mid-January.



Northern Saw-whet Owl at Lynde Shores, Whitby, *Durham*, 8 February 2009. © Mark Peck.



Barred Owl, Darlington Provincial Park, *Durham*, 8 February 2009. © Wilf Podolak.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER - 1 at Werry Rd, Solina, *Durham* on 8th (N. Miller fide DRBA) & 1 M at Nashville Cemetery, *York* on 21st (RJF,RHNC). 1 F at Mill St., Bond Head, *Durham* on 23rd (MJL fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 F at High Park on 24th (SMF).

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER - 1 F at 332 Sheldrake Blvd, Toronto from 1st to 9th (GF). Staying from 13 Jan 2009.

DOWNY WOODPECKER - 11 at Lambton Woods on 15th (SCH).

HAIRY WOODPECKER - 3 at Lambton Woods on 15th (SCH).

PILEATED WOODPECKER - 1 at Humber Rd, Toronto on 7th (AA) & 1 at HP on 14th (SMF) & 21st (Jeremy Hatt). 2 at Riverwood Park, Erindale, *Peel* on 15th (Terry Osborne fide ONTBIRDS) & on 19th (LF, Dan Salisbury, fide ONTBIRDS). Singles at Mountainview & Beechgrove SR, *Peel* on 15th (GCam), TRCA - Walker Woods, *Durham* on 20th (D. Connelly fide DRBA), Huntington Rd N of Nashville, *York* on 21st (RJF,RHNC, fide ONTBIRDS) & at Don Valley Brickworks Park on 24th (Colin Marcano fide OUTON).

NORTHERN SHRIKE – 1 at Humber Arboretum on 6th (Bernie Monette fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Miller SR & Dufferin, *York* on 7th (RJF fide

ONTBIRDS), 1 at Davis Rd., *York* on 7th (RJF) [Brydon 2009] & 1 at Major Mackenzie & CPR, *York* on 8th (JLo) [Brydon 2009]. 1 1W at Home Depot, Markham Rd., *York* on 8th (RBHS,WP), 1 at Olde Base Line & Dixie Rd, *Peel* on 9th (GCam) [Brydon 2009], 1 at Halls Rd., *Durham* on 20th (R. Stephenson fide DRBA) & 1 at Bathurst N of Queensville SR, *York* on 24th (NMu,ICa).

AMERICAN CROW - 7 at Montgomery Rd & Birchview on 3th (SCH fide ONTBIRDS) were mobbing a Cooper's Hawk.

COMMON RAVEN - 1 at Ravenshoe Rd & Woodbine, *York* on 6th (Lorena Campbell fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS), 1 at Darlington Prov. Park, *Durham* on 7th (RPyf fide DRBA) & 2 at Mountainview & Beechgrove SR, *Peel* on 15th (GCam). 1 at Hwy 35 & Hwy 115, *Durham* on 21st (THo fide DRBA) & 2 seen doing display flight at Mount Nemo, *Halton* during week ending 20 Feb (anon fide CEE, fide ONTBIRDS).

HORNED LARK - 130 at Courtice Rd 0.7km N of Bloor, *Durham* on 7th (RPyf, Dan Kaczynski, fide DRBA) & 6 (migrants) flying over CSSP on 14th (GC,GJB). Some at Woodchoppers Lane, Holland Marsh, *York* on 14th (RJF,MvdT, fide ONTBIRDS) & 9 there on 24th (NMu,ICa). A few at Halls Rd., *Durham* on 15th (RPyf fide DRBA) & 5 at Torbram & Olde Base Line, *Peel* on 21st (GCam) [Brydon 2009].

BROWN CREEPER – Singles at Holland Landing Prairie PNR, *York* on 7th (KRS) [Brydon 2009], Thicksens Woods, *Durham* on 14th (RPyf fide DRBA) & at Riverwood Park, Erindale, *Peel* on 19th (LF, Dan Salisbury, fide ONTBIRDS).

CAROLINA WREN - 1 at Thicksens Woods, *Durham* on 1st (DBar fide ONTBIRDS).

WINTER WREN - 1 at Thicksons Woods, *Durham* on 1st; it was also heard singing there at 06:25hrs on 5th (DBar fide ONTBIRDS).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET - 2 at Holland Landing Prairie PNR, *York* on 7th (KRS) [Brydon 2009].

AMERICAN ROBIN - 8 at 8th Line S of Derry Rd., *Halton* on 1st (RBHS,WP) & 75 at North Toronto Sewage Plant on 10th (ETB). 88 at Home Smith Park on 13th (SCH), 5 at Cedarvale Ravine on 16th (JMack) & 25 at 6th Line & Upper Middle Rd, *Halton* on 21st (Rod Murray fide ONTBIRDS).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD - In total, there were 33 reports, with 14 from *Toronto*, 11 from *York*, 4 from *Durham*, 1 from *Peel* and 3 from *Halton* (ETB; GJB; GC; RDC; GDe; RJF fide ONTBIRDS; SCH; RLau; BKM fide ONTBIRDS; JMack; NMu; WP; RPyne fide ONTBIRDS; RBHS; DW).

BROWN THRASHER - 1 at Riverwood Park, Erindale, *Peel* on 1st (RBHS,WP) at feeders at McEwan House (staying from 11 Jan 2009). It was reported again there on 6 dates from 6th to 28th (m. obs).

BOHEMIAN WAXWING - 40 at Long Sault C.A., *Durham* on 5th (J. Robinson fide DRBA) & 50 at Sideline 12 N of RR5, E of Claremont, *Durham* on 26th (ETB).

CEDAR WAXWING - 38 at Albion Trail, *Peel* on 17th (GCam) [Brydon 2009] & 50 at Sideline 12 N of RR5, E of Claremont, *Durham* on 26th (ETB).



Brown Thrasher wintering at Riverwood Park, *Peel*, 1 February 2009. © Winnie Poon.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER - 1 at St Lawrence Park, Port Credit, *Peel* @ 16:30hrs on 1st (RBHS) & 1 at Port Credit Harbour, *Peel* on 14th (Chris Street fide ONTBIRDS), just S of E side parking lot, in holly bushes.

EASTERN TOWHEE - 1 at Bessborough Dr, Oshawa, *Durham* on 15th (THo fide DRBA).

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW - 20 at LSS on 16th (Andreas Jonsson fide OUTON) & 34 there on 21st (NMu,ICa,EO'C).

SONG SPARROW - Singles at Idleswift Dr, Thornhill, *York* on 7th (GDe fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS), North Toronto Sewage Plant on 7th (ETB) & at Palace Court, Doncrest, *York* on 22nd (MAB fide Michael's Bull. #382).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW - 1 at Canada Life, University Ave. on 4th (RBHS) had probably been there all winter. 1 at Idleswift Dr, Thornhill, York on 7th (GDe fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS), 7 at Lambton Woods on 15th (SCH), 1 at Riverwood Park, Erindale, Peel on 19th (LF, Dan Salisbury, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at Palace Court, Doncrest, York on 22nd (MAB fide Michael's Bull. #382). 6 reports from HP from 10th to 28th with a high count of 4 there on 21st (SMF).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR - 2 at Conc 8 W of Brock Rd. (between sideroads 20 and 22), Durham on 7th (THo fide DRBA), were seen with a Snow Bunting flock. 1 at Courtice Rd N of Bloor, Durham on 7th (RPye, Dan Kaczynski, fide DRBA).

SNOW BUNTING - 5 at Lakeshore Rd E of Bond Head, Durham on 1st (K. Robinson fide DRBA), 150 at Strawberry Lane & Jane St., York on 7th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS) & 300 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd., York on 7th (KDu fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS). 1000 at Whites Rd & Altona Rd., Durham on 7th (THo fide DRBA), 3000 at Conc 8 W of Brock Rd., Durham on 7th (THo fide DRBA) & 6 at Courtice Rd 0.7km N of Bloor, Durham on 7th (RPye, Dan Kaczynski, fide DRBA). 6 at Darlington Prov. Park, Durham on 7th (RPye fide DRBA), 4 at LSS on 16th (Andreas Jonsson fide OUTON), 20 at Mayfield Rd & Dixie, Peel on 21st (GCam) [Brydon 2009] & 125 at Woodchopper's Lane, Holland Marsh, York on 24th (NMu, ICa).

NORTHERN CARDINAL - 11 at Home Smith Park on 13th & 12 at Lambton Woods on 15th (SCH).

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD - 29 at Lynde Shores C. A., Durham on 3rd (GC) & 1 at Dacre Crescent on 24th (SMF).

COMMON GRACKLE - 1 at Solina Rd N of Hwy 2, Durham on 7th (P. Hogenbirk fide DRBA).

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD - 78 at Lynde Shores C. A., Durham on 3rd (GC).

PINE GROSBEAK - 8 at 7th Conc & 15th SR King, York on 4th (Ann Love) [Brydon 2009], 1 at Townline N of Columbus Rd., Durham on 6th (THo fide DRBA) & 2 at Cameron Property, Albion, Peel on 13th (GCam) [Brydon 2009]. 1 at Mountainview & Beechgrove SR, Peel on 15th (GCam), some at a feeder in Greenbank, Durham on 18th (Dot Hooker fide DRBA) & 2 at Gore Rd., Peel on 18th (anon fide PG) [Brydon 2009].

PURPLE FINCH - 4 M at Edge Pegg Property, Durham on 3rd (JDL fide ONTBIRDS).

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL – 23 reports from 1st to 24th, most involving small groups of less than 10. The only report from Halton was of a small flock at Walkers Line & New St on 4th (anon fide CEE fide ONTBIRDS), but there must have been others, not reported to us. Surprisingly, there were no reports from Peel. In York, 4 (3M, 1F) were at Aurora on 1st (Siegmar Bodach fide ONTBIRDS) and two small flocks seen in YRF-North Tract on 6th (RJF fide ONTBIRDS). In Durham, there was 1 at Darlington P.P. on 1st (K. Robinson fide DRBA), 6 there on 8th (THo fide DRBA; GC &); 22 there on 14th (RPye fide DRBA) – the highest count of the period, and 5 there on 21st (RPye fide DRBA). Other Durham reports were: 2 at Edge Pegg property on 3rd (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 5 at Bessborough Dr, Oshawa on 6th (THo fide DRBA), 3 at Squires Beach Rd on 6th (DW fide DRBA), 6 at Thicksons Woods from 14-15th (RPye fide DRBA) and 12 at Halls Rd on 15th, with 8 there on 16th (both RPye fide DRBA). Reports from Toronto seem to indicate that the birds had exhausted 'natural' food supplies or that White Spruce cones has mostly shed their seeds, and the birds had to resort to atypical feeding strategies. For example, one was photographed on a nyger seed feeder at Mount Pleasant and Eglinton on 9th (Anne Monroe fide OUTON), while on same date Rick Lauzon noted 10 at Fairway Dr, Scarborough and commented that the 'flock has worked over White Spruce in the neighbourhood for the past month, now started feeding on Norway Spruce'. On 14th, a group of 4 (3M, 1F) were seen at Ashbridge's Bay Park feeding on the ground on Alder 'cones' (NMu, ICa); 5 were there on 17th (FP fide ONTBIRDS) and 8 there on 21st 'feeding on the ground, checking fallen cones' (ETB fide ONTBIRDS). Only one was seen there on 22nd (RBHS, WP). Another report, from Lawson Rd, W of Port Union Rd, Scarborough involved 2 which 'had been there a week, feeding on fallen spruce cones' (Martha Miller fide OUTON). In aggregate, these reports suggest that *available* spruce cones were getting scarce by the end of the period.

COMMON REDPOLL - 2 at Edge Pegg Property, Durham on 3rd (JDL fide ONTBIRDS), 38 at Lynde Shores C. A., Durham on 3rd (GC) & 10 at McFarlane Ct, Whitby, Durham on 5th (Gerry Ernest fide ONTBIRDS). 10 at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, Durham on 6th (GCarp fide DRBA) & 20 at Thicksons Woods, Durham on 14th (RPye fide DRBA). 55 at Riverwood Park, Erindale, Peel on 17th (anon fide LF, fide ONTBIRDS), 30 on 19th (LF, Dan Salisbury, fide ONTBIRDS) & 45 there on 21st (LF fide ONTBIRDS). 150 at LSS on 21st (NMu, ICa, EO'C).

HOARY REDPOLL - 1 at feeder in Maple, York on 4th (Lev Frid fide RJF, fide ONTBIRDS) & 1 at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, Durham on 6th (GCarp fide DRBA). 5 were reported at Riverwood Park, Erindale, Peel on 12th (Judi Parker fide ONTBIRDS) of which at least 2 were validated by photos (fide LF) however 5 at one spot is almost

unprecedented. 3 were reported there on 13th (GVR fide ONTBIRDS) but none were found there amongst the Common Redpolls on the 15th (Terry Osborne fide ONTBIRDS). On the 19th 2 were reported there (LF, Dan Salisbury, fide ONTBIRDS) & singles on the 20th (anon fide LF, fide ONTBIRDS), 21st (LF fide ONTBIRDS) & 28th (SCH). 2 at Humber Arboretum on 14th (AA), 1 at Running Robin Ranch, Whitby, *Durham* on 15th (CSAM fide DRBA) & 1 at Peninsula B, LSS on 21st (NMu, ICa, EO'C).



Female (top) and male (bottom) **White-winged Crossbills** feeding on fallen cones, observed during the ROM Birding Class field trip. Darlington Provincial Park, *Durham*, 8 February 2009. © Wilf Podolak.

PINE SISKIN – 440 at Palace Court, Doncrest, *York* on 2nd (MAB fide Michael's Bull. #382), was his peak count (from 17 nyger seed feeders!) 50 at Mcfarlane Ct, Whitby, *Durham* on 5th (Gerry Ernest fide ONTBIRDS), 50 at Bessborough Dr, Oshawa, *Durham* on 6th (THo fide DRBA) & 20 at 155 Ravenscroft Rd, Ajax, *Durham* on 6th (GCarp fide DRBA). 8 at 332 Sheldrake Blvd, Toronto on 11th (GF), 22 at Riverwood Park, Erindale, *Peel* on 12th (Judi Parker fide ONTBIRDS) & 12 there on 15th (Terry Osborne fide ONTBIRDS). 13 at Running Robin Ranch, Whitby, *Durham* on 15th (CSAM fide ONTBIRDS), including one 'green morph' bird. 15 at Darlington Prov. Park, *Durham* on 21st (RPye fide DRBA), 40 at Brooklin, *Durham* on 21st & 80 there on 22nd (B. Steele fide DRBA). 7 at Major Mackenzie & Hwy 27, *York* on 21st (RBHS, WP, RHNC), 20 at Cameron Property, Albion, *Peel* on 22nd (GCam) [Brydon 2009] & 3 (light green?) at Mill St., Bond Head, *Durham* on 23rd (MJL fide ONTBIRDS).

CITED OBSERVERS: & et al.; OFO-W OFO website; AA Alfred Adamo; Dbar Dennis Barry; ETB Eleanor Beagan; GJB Gerard Binsfeld; MAB Michael A. Biro; BB Bruce Brydon; GCam Gordon Cameron; ICa Ian Cannell; GCarp Geoff Carpentier; GC Glenn Coady; RDC Robert D. Cumming; RHC Bob Curry; GDe Gene Denzel; KDu Keith Dunn; CEE Cheryl Edgecombe; GF George Fairfield; SMF Steven Favier; LF Luc Fazio; IDMF Iain Fleming; RJF Ron Fleming; LFr Lynne Freeman; PG

Phyllis Graydon; SCH Sandra Hawkins; THo Tyler Hoar; TH Theo Hofmann; JI Jean Iron; RLau Rick Lauzon; GEL Graham Leonard; MJL Marcus J. Lise; JDL J. Doug Lockrey; JLo Joan Love; BKM Barry MacKay; JMack Jess MacKenzie; CSAM Craig S.A. McLauchlan; JBMW Jim Baillie Memorial Walk; NMu Norman Murr; EO'C Ed O'Connor; anon Unknown Observer; ONTBIRDS OFO Email Hotline; OUTON OutdoorOntario.net; MKP Mark K. Peck; FP Frank Pinilla; RJP Ron Pittaway; WP Winnie Poon; RPye Rayfield Pye; DRBA Durham Rare Bird Alert; RHNC Richmond Hill Nats.; GVR Garth Riley; DRuch Dave Ruch; KRS Kevin Shackleton; GSI Glenda Slessor; RBHS Roy B. H. Smith; MvdT Mike Van Den Tillaart; DW David Worthington.

REFERENCES

Brydon, Bruce, 2009. January-February 2009 Sightings. WHNC Newsletter March 2009: 9-10.

Compiled by Dave Worthington for the TOC Records Committee.

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Data entry by Roy Smith. 474 reports were added to the database for February 2009.

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

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Watching for Pine Siskins, Hwy 27 and Major Mackenzie Drive, York, 21 February 2009. © Winnie Poon.