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UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS ON THE DUNK AND
WILMOT RIVER WATERSHEDS

Kathy Martin
Biology Department
University of Prince Edward Island

The following is a list of unusual bird sightings observed on the Dunk and Wilmot River Watersheds and the area around Bedeque Bay during 1974 and 1975. These sightings were made while conducting a waterfowl study and, hence, do not cover all types of birds exhaustively or equally. For example, there was a greater likelihood of observing species associated with or living adjacent to waterfowl habitat than in other habitat types. However, species (e.g., warblers, owls) were observed as we walked the narrow wooded streams in spring and early summer or as we canoed the small ponds. Species related to agriculture (e.g., Hungarian Partridge) were observed while driving or walking from one river section to another.

In this article, I have recorded only sightings of birds which are considered in the Prince Edward Island Field Checklist of Birds (1974 edition) to be rare (1-5 birds per season), occasional (1-9 birds observed per decade), accidental (9 or fewer records per century), or hypothetical (unconfirmed sighting). (In some instances, the species is considered rare, occasional, accidental, or hypothetical and in other cases, the season in which they were observed makes the sighting unusual). A complete list of bird species observed on the Bedeque Bay area during the various seasons is available. Observations were made by myself and/or other field workers during the study: B. Butler, E. Hickey Jr., D. Smith, J. Steeves. Spring (March 16 - May 30); Summer (June 1 - July 30); Autumn (August 1 - December 16); Winter (December 15 - March 15).

SNOW GOOSE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
May 5/75	16:30	Chelton	One individual flying West. It was with a flock of 275 Canada Geese. Later the same day, one was observed with a flock of 20 Canada Geese in a ploughed field in Fernwood. The landowner (A. Pineau) said that it had been there for a week previous to May 5, feeding in the field morning and evening. These two sightings are probably the same bird.

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
May 9/75	17:45	Fernwood	One field feeding in grainfield northwest of Fernwood Road, one Snow Goose seen feeding with 135 Canada Geese near a temporary pond.
<u>RUDDY DUCK</u>			
Oct. 2/74	11:02	Dunk River Estuary	One female(?) swimming. Teal-sized diving duck. No distinct markings on wings, back and rump. We observed from canoe within 5 meters and it did not appear able to take flight (acted similar to a broody female).
<u>RED-TAILED HAWK</u>			
Jun 19/75	14:05	Stanchel	One Hawk soared over fields and woods. A grackle continuously mobbed it from the sides and behind making loud squeaks. The hawk turned its head in the grackles direction while soaring (J. Steeves).
Nov 1/75	10:15	East of Kinkora	It was hovering and then perched on a spruce tree. Seconds later a crow started dive bombing it and six more crows quickly arrived. It flew off east; the crows stopped the chase (E. Hickey).
<u>AMERICAN COOT</u>			
Dec 3/75	13:25	Bedeque Marsh	Two birds were observed 200 meters apart.
<u>SOLITARY SANDPIPER</u>			
Jun 27/75	08:30	Dunk River	One individual east of Trans-Canada Highway.
Jul 10/75	10:35	Clarkes Pond	One individual (Wilmot River).
Jul 22/75	11:05	Dunk River	Three individuals east of Trans Canada.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (Con't)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Aug 4/75	07:50	Fredericton Pond	Two individuals Dunk River.
Aug 5/75	12:45	Scales Pond	One individual.
Aug 7/75	06:45	Middleton Pond	One individual.
Aug 7/75	12:10	Wilmot River	Three individuals.
Aug 30/75	10:50	Middleton Pond	One individual.
Aug 31/75	08:50	Stanchel Ponds	Two individuals.
Sept 17/75	12:40	Bedeque Marsh	Three individuals below Wrights Pond.
Sept 17/75	15:50	Scales Pond	One individual.
Sept 18/75	15:05	Leards Pond	One individual.
Sept 18/75	16:17	Dunk River	One individual above Johnson's Bridge.

NOTE: Not observed in 1974. Observed commonly during the fall of 1975.

STILT SANDPIPER

Aug 8/74	08:10	Dunk River	Two individuals close to Trans-Canada Highway. At 08:10 saw one individual which was lame. Later that day in Dunk River Estuary, we saw two birds flying.
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FORESTER'S TERN (?)

Jun 17/74	07:30	Dunk River	Saw two terns in immature plumage. They could possibly be immature Common Terns with less than normal dark plumage on the head. Only the eye stripe was obvious. Is there much variation in the head plumage of the immature Common Tern?
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MOURNING DOVE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
May 10/75	07:00	Chelton	One sitting on a telephone wire. When we stopped to look at it, it flew away to the North.
Aug 15/75	16:30	Chelton	Two individuals. Same area as above. On tops of telephone wires.
Oct 4/75	18:30	Wrights Pond	One flew over pond and landed on the ground near the edge of the pond.

SNOWY OWL

Dec 30/75	17:00	Taylor Road	One perched on top of powerline pole (Wilmot River) (E. Hickey).
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RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

May 31/74	16:15	Albany	Above Leards Pond, two hummingbirds were probing alder catkins.
Aug 2/74	18:45	Chelton	Two fly over Chelton shore road into a potato field.
Jun 4/75	19:00	Chelton	One near a lilac bush.
Jun 4/75	20:25	Bradalbane Dam	One in apple tree over old barn.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER

May 19/75		Middleton Pond	One seen during Environment Week Natural History Walk (D. Smith).
Aug 4/75	09:10	Dunk River	One immature was first observed climbing and pecking on a telephone pole near Johnston's Bridge. It later flew off silently.

NOTE: Sapsuckers are probably more common than the number of sightings indicate. There is abundant evidence of their distinctive drilling along much of the Dunk River.

BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Jan 24/75	11:30	Bradalbane	One female on fence above Bradalbane Dam.

GRAY JAY(?)

Dec 2/75	14:05	Kinkora	One individual. Not a positive sighting (E. Hickey).
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RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH

May 3/74	08:50	Scales Pond	Heard one individual. Near Dam. Sound not nasal - A white-breasted Nuthatch?
Apr 20/74	12:30	Middleton	Saw two along narrow stream in coniferous woods below Middleton Pond.
Jun 28/74	09:15	Dunk River	Saw one above Johnston's Bridge near Drummond Road.
May 19/75		Middleton Pond	Saw several individuals (D. Smith).
Jun 10/75	14:30	Stanchel	Above Bradalbane Pond. Heard two singing. Did not recognize which species (E. Hickey).
Jun 26/75	06:15	Newton	Heard one individual below Murphy's Bridge, singing in distance.
Aug 4/75	08:15	Dunk River	Saw one immature above Johnston's Bridge near Drummond Road.

WINTER WREN

May 11/75	13:30	Dunk River	Saw one below Scales Pond.
May 23/75	18:05	Bradalbane Pond	First I heard one male singing above the pond and later I saw it.

CATBIRD

Sept 18/75	11:05	Wilmot River	Two below Clarkes Pond. One in an alder and one in a Red-Osier Dogwood.
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NORTHERN SHRIKE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Jun 5/74	10:05	Emerald	One south of Emerald Junction (B. Butler).
Oct 17/75	15:00	Salutation Cove	One flying over potato field to south of the Cove.

WARBLING VIREO (?)

May 19/75		Middleton Pond	One individual. Not sure of species (D. Smith).
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LAWRENCE'S WARBLER (?)

June 3/74	13:05 & 14:10	Middleton	Below Middleton Pond saw two warblers along small stream. The first (male?) had a completely yellow (golden) head, black breast, whitish-yellow belly, white wing bars and gray-blue on back with yellowish tinge. The second warbler (male?) had a brown streak through the eye, brown-yellow on back of head, light yellow on front of head. Black on breast, and white wing bars.
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NOTE: These two individuals resemble most closely Lawrence's Warbler as described in Roger Tory Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds. Lawrence's Warbler is a rare hybrid between the Blue-Winged and the Golden-Winged Warbler. These individuals (possibly a male and a female) had white wing bars characteristic of the Blue-Winged Warbler and the Black Breast (and throat) and the whitish belly characteristic of the Golden-Winged Warbler. There has been one (accidental) sighting of a Blue-Winged Warbler in Nova Scotia in May 1971. (Godfrey, Birds of Canada).

BLACKPOLL WARBLER

Jun 3/74	07:10	Scales Pond	One male
June 3/74	12:35- 14:10	Middleton	Below Middleton Pond, six males. Two males were together plus another. Further downstream, 3 additional males were observed.
Jun 7/74	12:45	Stanchel	One male above Bradalbane Dam, along stream.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (Con't)

NOTE: The Blackpoll Warbler was sighted five times during the springs of 1974 and 1975, and is listed as "Uncommon" in the P.E.I. Field Check List. It is listed as "rare" in summer and seven males were sighted along the Dunk River during the summer of 1974. Only the summer observations are listed above.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Aug 6/75	08:00	Dunk River	One east of Trans Canada Highway along Dunk River. It was seen in a woods near a small cattail marsh. It was redstart-sized with olive to dark brown back. No wing bars. Yellowish breast with streaks and a yellow stripe above the eye. There were long streaks along the sides and short on the breast.

MOURNING WARBLER

May 31/74	16:15	Albany	One male in alder thicket northwest of Albany Village.
May 19/75		Middleton Pond	One male (D. Smith).
Jun 7/74	15:45	Fredericton	One above Fredericton Pond. Along stream foraging on ground.
Jun 12/74	15:15	Emerald Junction	One male in fallen tree.

NOTE: This species is not mentioned as occurring in spring in the P.E.I. Field Check List. It was sighted twice in spring and in summer on the Dunk River, (listed as fairly common in summer).

CANADA WARBLER

Jun 7/74	08:10	Emerald Junction	One male along stream.
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BALTIMORE ORIOLE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Jun 3/74	09:40	Dunk River	One male below Wall's Bridge.
Jun 5/74	09:40	Emerald Junction.	Two males along stream.

COMMON GRACKLE

Jan 14/74	14:00	Wrights Pond	Six in trees close to dam.
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NOTE: Listed as occurring rarely in winter (P.E.I. Field Check List).

PINE GROSBEAK

Jan 16/74	13:00	Middleton Pond	One pair.
May 19/75		Middleton Pond	One male (D. Smith).

NOTE: Listed in the P.E.I. Field Check List as rare in spring and uncommon in winter.

PINE SISKIN

Feb 27/74	12:30	Emerald	Flock of approx. 25, close to Emerald Junction-foraging in alders.
Mar 21/74	13:30	Dunk River	Flock of approx. 50, below Scales Dam, in trembling aspen trees.

FOX SPARROW

Sept 30/75	11:30	Scales Pond	It had a rusty tail and no line above the eye.
Oct 16/75	16:30	Scales Pond	Two to three individuals.