

accordingly more subject to flooding in years of normal precipitation. Some of the dearth of soil must, therefore, be attributed to repeated flooding; and this area, partly represented by plots 5 and 6, is not altogether comparable to the higher ground, represented by plots 1-4 and H1-H4, when the effects of the 1947 flood are considered.

The writer is indebted to Dr. B. Boivin and Dr. W. G. Dore for assistance in identifying some of the plants in the plots.

### SUMMARY

A strip of grassland adjoining the Ottawa River was flooded throughout May and June, 1947. Nearly all the herbaceous plants were killed by this flood. By September, 1947, *Lysimachia nummularia* had invaded large areas of the denuded ground. During 1948 *L. nummularia* was partly replaced by *Potentilla argentea* and grasses. By September, 1950, recovery of the grass sod was almost complete, except in areas where soil is extremely scarce.

---

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

**Birds in Unusual Plumages at Pimisi Bay, Ontario.** — In February 1948 a Blue Jay, *Cyanocitta cristata* (Linnaeus) was caught and banded with a blue band. This bird, which by behaviour proved itself a female, possessed a white spot on the shoulders just below the nape. It was triangular in form and approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in size. There were also white feathers on the breast, which formed a small suffused and irregular patch a little to the right of the median line. Apparently this bird was a resident and observed in 1948, 1949 and 1950. She returned each fall and made irregular visits to my feeding station throughout the winters. During the springs of 1949 and 1950 she evidently bred in the neighbourhood, but, so far, no other Blue Jays in similar plumage have been seen.

On March 26, 1950, note was made of a Black-capped Chickadee, *Parus atricapillus* (Linnaeus), which had one large round dark spot on the right side of the breast and a smaller one on the left. The spots looked like dark thumb-marks and for several days I mistook them for accidental soiling of the breast feathers. When the bird was caught and examined it was found, however, that the feathers in this particular area had failed to lighten at the tips but retained their dark colour throughout.

On December 15, 1949, a Brown-headed Chickadee, *Parus hudsonicus* (Forster), appeared at my feeding station and came to the window at once. All its plumage, even to the bib and over the cheek-patches, was strongly tinted with rufous, (see colour chart, Birds of North America, F. M. Chapman, D. Appleton-Century Company, N.Y., 1940). In fact, the only places that lacked

this erythristic suffusion were small oval areas far down on each side of the breast. Above, this additional tinting made the bird appear sooty olive-brown and any light edgings of the wing feathers were entirely neutralized. A further oddity was that the bird's mandibles were elongated into curved and sharply pointed tips which crossed as in a crossbill.

The bird was found to be a female, her wing measurement corresponding to her behaviour in the spring. She was a small specimen, possibly as a result of the deformity of the bill, weighing between 10.6 and 11.2 gr., wing measuring 63 mm. in December, but wearing down to 60 mm. in February. She visited the feeding station up to May 24, 1950. During this time she had at least 4 companions of her own species, two of which were banded and one which also showed a definite erythristic trend in its plumage, in that the rufous of the flanks of this bird extended almost to the black bib and the cheeks were slightly tinged with reddish. The female paired with two normally plumaged birds in succession, both of which, in turn, disappeared. But her nest, or nests, unfortunately, I never succeeded in locating.

Mr. W. Earl Godfrey of the National Museum of Canada, to whom I sent a description and a drawing of the bird in crayons, assured me (in litt.) that such a colouration of a Brown-headed Chickadee was most unusual. He said, that of 1000 skins he had examined only one was of a similar plumage. This was a male of the race *littoralis*, which he collected in Nova Scotia. P. A. Taverner's sketch of this bird, which Mr. Godfrey kindly showed me, in-



icates that its cheeks were less strongly tinged than those of the female in question and, apparently, the upper surfaces of the wings, as well as the cap and bib, were not so dull or neutralized in colour. — LOUISE DE KIRILINE LAWRENCE, Rutherglen, Ontario.

**The Nevada Cowbird at James Bay, Ontario.** — On May 27, 1947, an adult female cowbird was collected at the mouth of Moose River, James Bay, Ontario, by Dr. O. H. Hewitt. This specimen, in the collection of the National Museum of Canada, was recently examined by the writer and was found to be *Molothrus ater artemisiae* Grinnell, the Nevada Cowbird. The occurrence of this western race in the James Bay region is of particular interest in connection with Todd's (1943, Can. Field-Nat., 57: 79-80) discussion of the western element in the James Bay avifauna. — W. EARL GODFREY, National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

#### James Bay Sparrow at Ottawa

**Ammospiza caudacuta altera** Todd. James Bay Sparrow. — The specimen recorded as "*Passerherbulus nelsoni nelsoni* (Allen). Nelson's Sparrow" in "The Birds of Ottawa, 1923" (Can. Field-Nat., Vol. 38, p. 10) has been re-examined at my request by Mr. W. Earl Godfrey, through the courtesy of St. Patrick's College, Ottawa. It proves to be an example of Todd's newly described subspecies *altera*, which has now been recognized as distinct from *nelsoni*. — HOYES LLOYD, Ottawa.

**Duck Hawk at Blue Sea Lake, Quebec.** — Gabrielson<sup>1</sup> has recorded the bird-life of this area at considerable length and has included many observations made by Taverner and me. One additional species can be added to those given by him in the papers cited.

While I was waiting for the Ottawa-bound train at Burbidge Station on the afternoon of May 25, 1923, a Duck Hawk flew past me towards the lake. It was about 150 yards away and the black cap and face markings showed beautifully clear in bright sunshine. This is my only Blue Sea Lake record for the Duck Hawk. — HOYES LLOYD, Ottawa.

#### Recent Ottawa District Bird Records

1. **Coturnicops noveboracensis noveboracensis** (Gmelin). Yellow Rail.

Near Cantley, Quebec, on November 14, 1948, Rowley Frith found the desiccated remains of a bird of this species impaled on a barbed wire fence. This accidental death occurred in country which is about half forest, half farmland.

2. **Stelgidopteryx ruficollis serripennis** (Audubon). Rough-winged Swallow.

A juvenile, barely able to fly, and attended by an adult was seen by Rowley Frith and me near Poupore, Quebec, on July 14, 1950. At this place a small stream was crossed by a concrete bridge which afforded possible nesting sites in its drainage holes. The young bird was easily collected by hand and affords an interesting Quebec breeding record for this species.

3. **Passerherbulus henslowii henslowii** (Audubon). Western Henslow's Sparrow.

Dr. Norman Guiou and Rowley Frith found the first evidence leading to inclusion of this species in the Ottawa list. Near Carlsbad Springs, on July 18, 1950, unknown bird notes were heard by them in a weedy hay-meadow. Frith returned on July 19 and again on July 22. On the latter date he saw a small sparrow give the characteristic abbreviated song of this species and finally concluded correctly that the stranger was a Henslow's Sparrow.

On July 24, Frith took me to the place, where we saw one bird as it sang from a weed-stem, and estimated that there were about four singing males in the colony. None sang on the evening of July 25, which was cool and windy. In spite of this, we succeeded in flushing and collecting one adult male. On July 27, several birds were heard, always under cover; and one which I followed kept a few feet ahead of me for about one hundred yards without being seen once. — HOYES LLOYD, Ottawa.

#### FOR SALE

Jr. Mammalogy, 1942-1950

Copeia, 1944-1950

(1945 No. 1 and 1949 No. 1 missing)

Would trade for early volumes of Bent.

Write Box 337, Fort William, Ontario.

<sup>1</sup> Can. Field-Nat., Vol. 52, No. 6, pp. 79-87, 1938.  
Can. Field-Nat., Vol. 63, No. 4, pp. 137-143, 1949.





Lawrence, Louise de Kiriline. 1951. "Birds in unusual plumages at Pimisi Bay, Ontario." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 65(1), 45–46.

<https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341300>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/90126>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341300>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/341300>

#### **Holding Institution**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

#### **Sponsored by**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

#### **Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.