

BIRD KILLS AT THE LENNOX GENERATING STATION 1981

Helen R. Quilliam.

In mid-July 1981 we received a call from Ontario Hydro at the Lennox Generating Station that made us fear that disaster lay ahead for migrating birds in the coming autumn. Hydro had been informed by the Department of Transport that no longer would they be allowed to turn off the floodlights that light the two high chimneys at the Lennox plant. Ron Weir, who had been the prime mover in persuading the Lennox operation to turn off their floodlights during spring and fall migration seasons since 1973 and who had also supplied them with the proper dates and taken delivery of the casualties, immediately got in touch with the Dept. of Transport in Toronto but was told that the red lights on the top of the chimneys could no longer be considered sufficient for night-flying aircraft and that floodlights must remain on. Our fears of a disaster were confirmed all too sadly on the night of Sept. 2/3 with 618 dead birds picked up there. Worse was to follow on two more nights (see Table 1 below) until finally, after public outcry, the manager turned off the lights in the early hours of Sept. 9 declaring there had been a malfunction in them. He kept them off despite warnings from the Dept. of Transport that Hydro would be held responsible for any accidents to aircraft. Strobe lights, which it has been found do not attract birds to man-made obstacles, although very expensive to be installed, will be put in place before autumn migration in 1982 according to Mr.V. Lynch, Station Manager.

Table 1 gives the nights on which birds were killed, the status of the floodlights and the weather conditions on those nights. Note that there was only one kill in the spring and small ones just as migration was beginning. It was not until the end of the first week in September during a spell of bad weather that the real carnage began. Table 2 is a summary of all the kills at Lennox since the erection of the first chimney in 1972 and Table 3 gives the species and their numbers in the 1981 kill.

Table 1. Bird Kills at Lennox Generating Plant 1981.

Date	Number	Floodlights	Weather
May 25/26	8	Off	Moderate winds, overcast.
July 29/30	3	On	Moderate winds, heavily overcast, cool.
Aug 24/25	23	On	Windy and cool.
Sep 2/3	618	On	Rain
Sep 5/6	3798 +200*	On	NE wind, overcast occasional drizzle
Sep 6/7	5418 +400*	On	Light rain & fog, no wind.
Sep 7/8	134	On	Windy and cold
Sep 8/9	86	On but after midnight off.	Windy and cold.
Sep 9/10	35	Off	Windy and cold.

\*An estimated 100 birds on Sep 5/6 and 300 on Sep 6/7 were seen lying in inaccessible places and could not be picked up and another 100 on each date were injured and may have died later elsewhere.

Table 2. Summary of Total Kills at Lennox from 1972 to the present.

Year	Spring	Fall	Total	Floodlights	Notes
1972		5326	5326	On	1 Chimney
1973	244	697	941	Off	1 "
1974	92	1188	1280	"	1 "
1975	297	324	621	"	2 Chimneys
1976	36	327	363	"	2 "
1977	124	2575	2699	On	2 ", lights doused 3 times.
1978	21	212	233	Off	2 "
1979	85	201	286	"	(except on July 27, then doused) 2 Chimneys.
1980	21	62	83	"	"
1981	8	10710	10718	Spring off, Fall on until Sep 9.	2 Chimneys.
	928	21722	22650		

The large number of kills in 1977 happened when for a short time Hydro did not turn off the lights having been told that Toronto would notify them when poor weather was approaching. The kills that year might have been much worse had not the watchman in charge ordered the lights off when he became aware of what was happening outside (BB 24:40-44)

Table 3. Species of birds killed at Lennox. 1981.

Species	May 25/26	July 29/30	Aug 24/25	Sep 2/3	Sep 5/6	Sep 6/7	Sep 7/8	Sep 8/9	Sep 9/10	Total
Least Bittern					1	8				9
Blue-winged Teal		2								2
Ruffed Grouse										1
Virginia Raol										1
Whip-poor-will										1
Eastern Kingbird										1
Great Crstd. Flycatcher										1
Yellow-bel. Flycatcher				9	11	48	2			70
Traill's Flycatcher				2	6	9				17
Least Flycatcher			1		13	25	2			41
E. Wood Pewee				2	12	8	1			23
Empidonax (sp.)					1					1
Barn Swallow		1								1
Red-brstd. Nuthatch					1	2	1			4
Catbird						1				1
Wood Thrush						1				1
Swainson's Thrush					2	15	4			21
Veery				3	9	21	2			35
Ruby-crowned Kinglet							1			1
Cedar Waxwing						4				4
Yellow-thrted. Vireo				2	4	5		1		12
Solitary Vireo						1				1
Red-eyed Vireo	2			216	559	570	18	5	7	1377
Philadelphia Vireo				4	19	36	4	1		64
Warbling Vireo					2	1				3
Black-&-white Warbler			1	7	50	136	5	1		200
Golden-winged Warbler				1	2	7				10
Tennessee Warbler	1		1	27	298	207	4	1	1	540
Nashville Warbler					10	10	2			22
N. Parula Warbler				1	5	22				28

Table 1 (Contd.)

Species	May 25/26	July 29/30	Aug 24/25	Sep 2/3	Sep 5/6	Sep 6/7	Sep 7/8	Sep 8/9	Sep 9/10	Total
Yellow Warbler				2	28	26			1	56
Magnolia Warbler	1		3	11	230	760	22	10	2	1039
Cape May Warbler			2	7	231	176	2	2	2	422
Black-thrd. Blue Warb.				7	54	154	17	2	1	235
Black-thrd. Green W.			1	4	51	123		1		180
Cerulean Warbler					1	1				2
Blackburnian Warbler			2	136	550	291	10	12	2	1003
Chestnut-sided W/			1	6	47	60	1	5		120
Bay-breasted Warbler	2		3	56	831	758	9	15	6	1680
Blackpoll Warbler					11	7	1		1	20
Prairie Warbler						1				1
Ovenbird	1		5	52	189	411	12	3	6	679
Northern Waterthrush				5	19	80			1	105
Connecticut Warbler				1	7	7				15
Mourning Warbler				9	74	82				165
Common Yellowthroat	1		1	18	194	1002	10	9	2	1237
Wilson's Warbler				1	7	11				19
Canada Warbler				21	131	37		1		190
American Redstart			2	6	86	247	6	13		360
Warbler (sp.)				1	13			2		16
House Sparrow								1		1
Bobolink					21	8				29
Northern Oriole				1	9	12				22
Scarlet Tanager					4	1				5
Rose-brstd. Grosbeak					2	14			2	18
Indigo Bunting						1				1
Chipping Sparrow						1				1
Lincoln's Sparrow						3				3
Species unknown estimated					200	400				600
Total numbers	8	3	23	618	3998	5813	134	86	35	10718
Total species	6	2	12	28	42	49	21	17	14	

In the year under review it is particularly distressing to find that 9 Least Bitterns were killed, when we consider how scarce this marsh bird is in our area where a person may search many a marsh before finding a pair. It is not difficult to see from this list that the highest proportion of birds killed are flycatchers, vireos and warblers all of them insect eaters. Apart from our feelings of sadness at the death of creatures that lighten our lives there are common sense reasons for regretting the losses. Bay-breasted Warblers are particularly useful in helping control spruce budworm outbreaks. We don't even know what effect the loss of the other warblers might have on various ecosystems. It might be argued that a few thousand birds of a single species will not make much difference but the incident here will be only one of a large number over the continent, just one more hazard to add to the already long list of difficulties that the migrating bird must overcome to enable it to return to its breeding grounds.

Some notes from Doug McRae from Peterborough on what was happening there at the same time are of interest since they show that heavy migration was also going on there: "The night flight on September 6/7 was the heaviest I have ever heard and contained an incredibly large number of Veeries. I have not checked our tower regularly since 1978 but I did go up on the morning of the 7th and again the next day. Enclosed is a list of my findings (Table 4). Until this check our biggest kill was

just over 200, on the night of Sept. 20/21 1974".

Table 4. Bird Kills at C.H.E.K. Tower, Peterborough 1981.

Species	Sep 6/7	Sep 7/8	Species	Sep 6/7	Sep 7/8
Yellow-bel. Flycatcher	1		Chestnut-sided Warbler	11	1
Wood Thrush		1	Bay-breasted Warbler	77	44
Swainson's Thrush		3	Blackpoll Warbler		1
Veery	22	8	Ovenbird	9	10
Yellow-thrted.Vireo		1	Northern Waterthrush	1	
Red-eyed Vireo	65	9	Connecticut Warbler		1
Philadelphia Vireo	8		Mourning Warbler	2	
Black-&-white Warbler	13	1	Yellow-breasted Chat	1	
Tennessee Warbler	27	11	Common Yellowthroat	2	1
Nashville Warbler	1	1	Wilson's Warbler	1	1
Magnolia Warbler	24	8	Canada Warbler	6	5
Cape May Warbler	2	6	American Redstart	4	1
Black-thrted.Blue Warbler	1	2	Rose-brstd.Grosbeak	2	3
Black-thrted.Green Warbler	2	1	Northern Oriole	2	
Blackburnian Warbler	38	9		<u>322</u>	<u>129</u>

1981 REPORT - KINGSTON REGION  
ONTARIO BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

Ron Weir.

The Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (OBBA) was begun in 1981 to determine the distribution of the breeding birds of Ontario. The project, to run until 1985, is sponsored by the FON and the Long Point Bird Observatory supported by the World Wildlife Federation, CWS, Ontario Ministry of Environment, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Parks Canada.

The Kingston region, one of 41 regions in Ontario, consists of 60 squares, each of which measures 10 km x 10 km, which are the fine blue-lined grid squares shown on topographical maps 1:250,000 and 1:50,000. Volunteers choose one or more squares for which they attempt to obtain the strongest evidence of breeding for as many species as possible in each square. There are four possible levels of breeding evidence; namely Observed species in breeding season (no indication of breeding); Possible breeding (species seen or a single ♂ singing in suitable habitat); Probable breeding; Confirmed breeding. The detailed instruction booklet given to each participant describes what fits into each category. Our region boundaries extend from about Joyceville on the east side to Madoc on the west and the northerly boundary is just north of Westport. The southern edge extends from about Belleville to Napanee before running south to take in Amherst and Wolfe Islands.

The participant response for the Kingston region was excellent in 1981 with 36 squares assigned and returns received from 35 squares. These are listed in Table 1 where the block code (either UD or UE) accompanies the square number. The squares are numbered from west to east on the map (00,10,20... in the first row; 01, 11,21... in the second row etc.). Shown in the table are the numbers of breeding species possible (PO), probable (P) and Confirmed (C). Those species reported as observed only (O) are excluded from Table 1.

The cooperators listed in Table 1 are as follows Faith Avis - FA, Art Bell - AEB, John Blaney - JB, Marie Brooks - MB, Dale Clarke - DC, Kenneth Edwards - RKE, Mike Evans - MJE, Alison Gagnon - AG, Marg Hendrick - MH, Jim Hughes - JH, Mary