

SOME BIRDS OF NORTHEASTERN MANITOBA — 1975-1977

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The bird fauna of the Churchill region, Manitoba, has been well documented, and most recently summarized by Jehl and Smith, and by Cooke *et al.*^{7, 1} However, inland localities in northeastern Manitoba have been less intensively studied, probably because of their relative inaccessibility. This paper presents observations of birds that were near or beyond the known limits of breeding ranges in inland northeastern Manitoba and the Churchill area. The observations were made during studies of the distribution and abundance of birds along the proposed Polar Gas Project pipeline route;^{9, 10} most records were obtained during the breeding season.

Some of the inland localities included in our study area have been visited previously by Preble, Davis, Gillespie, and Rising and Schueler.^{14, 2, 4, 15} Bird lists are also available for adjacent areas to the west and south.^{5, 8, 12, 17}

The observations reported here include both incidental sightings and sightings that were made during systematic aerial and ground surveys. Except for those localities listed as at or near Churchill, all locations mentioned in the text were between 60 and 150 km from Hudson Bay. Geographic features mentioned in the text are shown in Figure 1.

GREAT BLUE HERON. The most northerly record was one near Gillam, 21 June 1977. A colony of 5-10 pairs nesting on an island in the

Stull River at 54° 48' N. Lat. on 18 June 1977 was about 200 km north of the known breeding range;⁶ however, our discovery of four other colonies in adjacent Ontario (Morden Lake, North Caribou Lake, Makoop Lake and near Two Rivers Lake) suggest that this colony is not beyond the regular nesting range of the species.

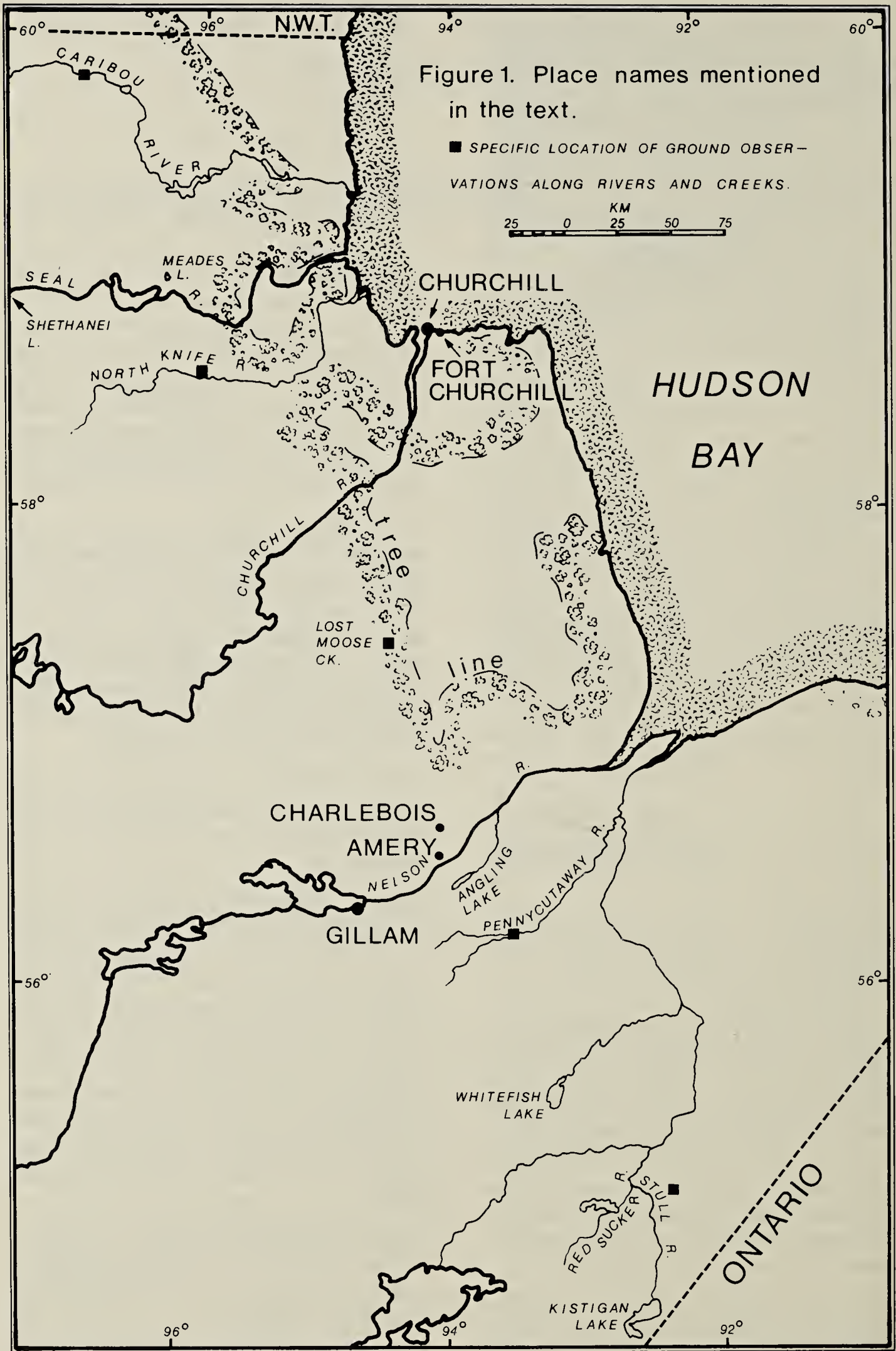
HARLEQUIN DUCK. Three females (studied for 30 min. at distances of 30 m) at the mouth of the Churchill River, 12 September 1977. There are three previous reports for the area^{3, 11, 13, 16}; the last of these records (three females at Cape Merry, near Churchill, on 2 July 1977) may be the same birds that we observed.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER. An unusually large concentration of 2,500 along the coast at Fort Churchill, 30 June 1977.

BLACK SCOTER. Widely distributed in groups of up to 20 on tundra ponds, lakes and rivers between the Churchill River and the N.W.T. border, 25-27 June 1977. An unusually large concentration of 6,000 along the Hudson Bay coast at Fort Churchill, 30 June 1977. A very tame female on a pond near the North Knife River acted as though a nest or brood was located nearby, 27 June 1977.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK. One north of the Churchill River, 25 June 1977, was about 500 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

GOLDEN EAGLE. One over the North Knife River, 22 May 1976; and two





Osprey.

Fred W. Lahrman

over the Stull River, 29 May 1976.

OSPREY. Noted regularly north to the Seal River where six were seen between Shethanei Lake and the coast on 24-25 June 1977. The only active nest found in northeastern Manitoba was at Whitefish Lake, 18 June 1977.

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE. One at Whitefish Lake, 15 June 1977. An adult with three chicks at Amery, and four adults near Charlebois, 23 June 1977.

SANDHILL CRANE. Noted on four occasions during the breeding season. One at Amery, 23 June 1977; single pairs near the Stull River, 17 June 1977; near the Red Sucker River, 18 June 1977; and at Angling Lake, 21 June 1977.

AMERICAN COOT. Two adults with four young at Churchill, 30 June 1977. There are four previous records, including one breeding record, for the Churchill area.⁷

WHIMBREL. Nine scattered individuals and pairs on tundra near

the Caribou River, 26 June 1977; their agitated behaviour suggested nesting.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER. Observed in open muskegs near Angling Lake, 20 June 1977 (two displaying); and near the North Knife River, 27 June 1977 (three displaying).

STILT SANDPIPER. Displaying and possibly breeding in open muskegs near the Caribou River, 26 June 1977 (1 individual); and near the North Knife River, 27 June 1977 (2).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT. Two chasing and displaying over open muskeg near Angling Lake, 20 June 1977. One near Caribou River, 26 June 1977. Both localities are outside the known breeding range.⁶

RING-BILLED GULL. Nine at Gillam garbage dump, 20 May 1976. One at Churchill, 16 August 1976; at least four previous records for the Churchill area.^{3 7 13} A group of four on the Nelson River downstream from Gillam, 22 September 1976.

MOURNING DOVE. One at Gillam, 23 June 1977.

BELTED KINGFISHER. Singles and pairs recorded at Pennycutaway River, 21 June 1977; at Gillam, 22 June 1977; and along Lost Moose Creek, 22 June 1977. Two adults at a nest hole, Gillam, 21-23 May 1976. These observations are 100-400 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

BANK SWALLOW. A nesting colony of 75 birds, Gillam, late June 1976.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH. Recorded at Gillam, 22 June 1977; and at Meades Lake, 25 June 1977. The latter locality is 600 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

WINTER WREN. One singing male at Pennycutaway River, 21 June 1977. This locality is 400 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD. One at Churchill, 16 June 1975. There have been three previous records for the Churchill area.^{1 7}

BROWN THRASHER. One near Churchill, 13 and 16 June 1976; the two sightings were 10 km apart and possibly of different birds. There are five previous records for the Churchill area.^{1 7 13}

SWAINSON'S THRUSH. One feeding along the Goose Creek Road near Churchill, 14 June 1975; there are four previous records for the Churchill area.^{1 7} One singing male near Meades Lake, 26 June 1977, was about 200 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH. One singing male near Charlebois, 23 June 1977, was on the edge of the known breeding range.⁶

WATER PIPIT. Nest with four eggs at Meades Lake, 27 June 1977; probably first nesting record for an inland locality in Manitoba.

SOLITARY VIREO. One at Gillam, 28

May 1976. There are two previous records for Gillam^{4 15}; Gillespie assumed that the species was breeding.⁴

MAGNOLIA WARBLER. Two males at Gillam, 20 May 1976. Several singing males near Stull River, 17 June 1977. These localities are 150+ km north of the known breeding range,⁶ but this species has been previously reported from Gillam and Churchill.^{4 15 7}

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER. One singing male at Stull River, 17 June 1977, was 150 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

OVENBIRD. One singing male at Stull River, 17 June 1977, was 150 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD. Seen at Churchill, 10 June 1975 (one male) and 27 June 1976 (two males). Listed as a "rare summer visitor" in the Churchill area.⁷

WESTERN MEADOWLARK. One at Churchill, 28 June 1977. Listed as a "rare and irregular summer visitor" to the Churchill area.⁷

PINE SISKIN. Recorded at Charlebois, 23 June 1977; and at Gillam, 22 June 1977. The latter locality is 500 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

SHARP-TAILED SPARROW. One heard singing in a sedge marsh at Akudlik near Churchill, 9 June 1975. Two previous records at this same marsh are the only other records for the Churchill area.⁷

CHIPPING SPARROW. One seen at Fort Churchill, 9 June 1975. Regularly seen and heard singing throughout the study area north to the North Knife River, June 1977. This latter locality is about 150 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW. One singing male at Gillam, 22 June 1977,

was 600 km north of the known breeding range.⁶

SMITH'S LONGSPUR. Three singing males recorded in tundra near the Caribou River, 27 June 1977. Extent of breeding range away from the Hudson Bay coast is poorly known.

Acknowledgements

The data presented here were collected as part of a more extensive study of birds in Ontario and Manitoba carried out by LGL Ltd. under contract to the Polar Gas Project, who provided excellent logistic support. Studies in 1975 were undertaken by R. Davis, D. Fidler, C. Holdsworth, D. Kuch, P. McLaren and W. Renaud; in 1976 by L. Patterson, M. McLaren and D. Troy; and in 1977 by the writers, C. Holdsworth, G. Johnston, P. McLaren and E. Nol — all of LGL Ltd. We thank R. Davis, L. Patterson, P. McLaren and W. J. Richardson of LGL Ltd.; and J. Riddick and B. Ross of Polar Gas Project for their comments on this paper.

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