

# **BIRDING IN NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, ONTARIO**

*By Clive Goodwin*

[The following account is based on, but much expanded from, the second edition of my own *A Bird-Finding Guide to Ontario*, and on two articles from *OFO News*; the first from October 2000 by Don Shanahan, Birding Guide to Presqu'île Provincial Park and Area; [the section of this covering areas inland from Brighton appears largely verbatim] and the second from February 1997 by myself, Peter's Woods in Northumberland County. I am grateful to Jean Iron and Don Shanahan for permission to draw on these accounts. Material for Cobourg is drawn from my birding guide for the town's tourism department].

## **INTRODUCTION**

Northumberland County lies roughly half-way along the north shore of Lake Ontario. An hour's drive to the west lie Toronto and its satellite communities, which are gradually expanding eastwards. At present, however, the city's influence is relatively lightly felt, although the two towns of Port Hope and Cobourg, lying as they do in the western half of the county, are feeling pressures. With populations of some 12,000 and 19,000 respectively they are already the largest communities in the county, and both are wrestling with the prospects of more, and accelerating, growth.

Northumberland is a long, narrow county bordering Lake Ontario for some 70 km. Most of its northern boundary follows the slender finger of Rice Lake running from SW to NE, with the Trent River continuing on the same line to the east, and then looping southwards through Campbellford, before turning east again at the boundary with Quinte West.

It is a county of rolling, scenic countryside. The Oak Ridges moraine, with the drumlins of the Peterborough drumlin field, occupies much of the countryside inland from Lake Ontario. To the south, along the lake itself, a narrow agricultural plain runs east to Trenton. This adds up to a diverse and picturesque region with prosperous agriculture and orchards alternating with reforestation, some areas of fine woodland, many cedar bogs and rocky and sandy fields.

Rice Lake is cottage country, and access roads that are pleasantly uncluttered during the colder months become busy in summer and jammed with urban refugees on the weekends.

The region is rich in birds. A few southern specialties such as gnatcatcher and Orchard Oriole are scattered along the lake; inland the mixed woodlands yield a suite of such species as Eastern Wood Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, Wood Thrush, Black and white Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush and White-throated Sparrow; and more open country yields the birds of old fields. Lake Ontario continues its role as both barrier and pathway, with Presqu'ile Provincial Park to the east hooking out to concentrate the flow of migrants. Winters grow longer and more severe as one moves east, but the compensation for the later springs is that flights of winter finches and other northerners may occur here without penetrating further west.

To attempt a comprehensive overview of all the birding areas in the County is beyond the scope of this web-page. The account that follows deals with Presqu'ile at length, and then covers lakeshore birding and a sampling of the most noteworthy inland areas, from west to east.

### **PRESQU'ILE PROVINCIAL PARK**

Brighton [Highway 401 exit 509] is the nearest community to Presqu'ile Provincial Park. This is not only the premier bird-watching location in the county, but one of the finest in the Province, and is designated as an *Important Bird Area*. It is best known for the thousands of diving ducks that stage in early spring, and as one of the best places in the Province for viewing shorebirds. But the park is of great interest year-round. It is a significant concentration point for landbird migrants both spring and fall, has huge water bird colonies, productive marshes and some fine coniferous and mixed woodlands. It is equally rich botanically.

To reach Brighton from Highway 401 drive south on Northumberland County Road [below, CR] 30. Turn west in the centre of the village on to CR 2, and to reach the Park continue to CR 66, which is well marked on the south side at the west end of town.

CR 66 runs 4 km south to the lake and then curves west to cross a causeway at the north end of the Presqu'ile marshes. From this point **Brighton sewage lagoons** are easy to reach. At the point the road curves, a sideroad [Harbour Street] continues south, then turns east to follow the shoreline. This road winds around for 2.2 km [ the water

leads along here can yield waterbirds, especially terns; and the sideroads to the south, especially Baldwin Ave., give excellent views of the north shore of Presqu'ile Bay] before ending at Prince Edward Street. Turn right here. The lagoons are 0.4 km along on the north.

To continue straight into the park without visiting the lagoons [the usual procedure] take the curve on CR 66 and cross the causeway. There are a couple of locations along the road where it is possible to pull off and view the wetlands on both sides, which can sometimes be productive. Past the marshes the road turns south again, and the park gate is just ahead, with the main office on the right.

### **General Information**

Presqu'ile occupies a hook-shaped peninsula [shown on the accompanying trail map in the Maps section of this site]. It consists of a long sand spit – technically a tombolo – which finally merges with the west end of the 'ile', a flat limestone island. On the west side of the tombolo is Popham Bay with its long sand beach, while to the east narrow strips of mature coniferous forest – the Fingers – extend out into the extensive marshes of Presqu'ile Bay. The road itself crosses an area of open, low-lying sandy pannes between the dunes on each side, covered with scattered cedar, pine and poplar. Much of this area is flooded in spring and some is wet year-round. It is a fascinating area botanically, but not so good for birds.

South and east of the tombolo, Presqu'ile is covered by mixed forest interspersed with more open areas, and the section bordering Presqu'ile Bay [Bayshore Drive, the northerly shoreline] is a strip of private cottages that lie outside the park. The park road itself branches off to the south, passing the campground complex with its own internal road system, and then becomes a one-way loop, following the south shoreline through the picnic areas. At the park's easternmost point [Lighthouse Point], the road turns back west and meanders back to rejoin the main park road a little way east of the campground entrance.

Park entry requires a day or season permit [self-serve during the less busy periods]. It has a bird checklist, and Steve LaForest's *Birds of Presqu'ile Park* is a compilation of records up to March 1992 [note, however, that 52% of the Presqu'ile records in this web-site's database were originated after this date, so the book is now quite out-date]. The birding page of the Friends of Presqu'ile web-site [<http://www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca.>] provides a sampling of current sightings from visiting birders over the past week. Once in the Park

there is a sightings board located at one side of the parking lot for the campground office. A sightings book located to the right of the board itself gives details of more noteworthy observations. There is also a board outside the Helleiner residence at 186 Bayshore Drive, near the end of the cottage road, listing recent sightings in the area of the lighthouse.

It is important to emphasize that entries in the sightings book are the main vehicle for communicating with other visiting birders, and are also the **only** way of ensuring that your observations become part of the permanent records of the park, and of the database that supports this web-site. Birders are strongly urged to enter their more noteworthy observations in the book.

Two other matters of general information are important. First, waterfowl hunting occurs on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays in autumn from late September to December, which both limits access to some areas [Owen Point, and parts of the main marsh and the Calf Pasture] and the number of birds that can be seen.

Second, access to bird feeders along Bayshore Road, as well as some waterfowl viewing opportunities over Presqu'île Bay in early spring, entail entering the private cottage area. While the road itself there is public, the properties themselves obviously are not and it is very important to show courtesy if using this area. Please do not block the road or driveways, or trespass on private property, no matter how enticing the potential birds are behind. None of this is new, but problems continue to occur, and it is especially inexcusable in the Brighton area, as there has been an unfortunate history of friction and misunderstandings between naturalists and local people there. [A more complete discussion of birding ethics appears on pp. 6-7 of the second edition of my *A Bird-Finding Guide to Ontario*].

Brighton has two motels, several bed and breakfasts, and there is a restaurant just outside the park gate. The park campgrounds are, of course, ideally situated, especially High Bluff, which is immediately adjacent to Owen Point.

### **The Pannes and Owen Point Trail**

Driving south across the pannes the visitor passes sideroads leading to the beaches of **Popham Bay** on the west [numbered 1 to 3, although the roads to Beaches 2 and 3 are usually closed except in summer], then one to the Marsh Boardwalk on the east, and finally a fourth to the west leading to the Owen Point trail [formerly, Beach 4]. When

open, Beach 1 gives access to the more manicured, northern sections of beach. This area is very heavily used; however, these beaches [especially Beach 3] can be good for loitering waterfowl and gulls, and for shorebirds, especially in spring.

**Owen Point trail** is the usual birder access point. Here the access path runs from the parking lot through the line of poplars that fringe the eastern-most dune, before emerging on the beach itself. This tree line frequently has landbird migrants moving along it in season. The beach here is not manicured, and a viewing station provides views both north and south. To the north one can view the long sweep of Popham Beach, and a path running north provides closer access to any birds there. The bay should be carefully scanned for waterbirds [this station is the source of most of the Park's Red-throated Loon records], and the islands and Owen Point are visible to the south.

The Owen Point trail itself becomes a narrow path through the belt of dense sandbar willows that dominate the shoreline of the natural beach, which is the southernmost of the beaches. Several side paths lead to look-outs at the edge of the shrubs. The character of the beach along this stretch varies greatly, even from day to day. At one extreme, sometimes in spring the lake will be lapping at the roots of the willow thickets; on the other hand, often in fall a wide area of open beach will be exposed, covered in an odiferous carpet of green algae. This can be teeming with shorebirds, and dabbling duck and gulls forage in the shallows. The line of dense willows is hard to bird, but good numbers of migrant passerines can occur, and sparrows will forage on the ground at the very edge of the willow screen.

### **Owen Point and the Islands**

Owen Point is a concentration area for landbird migrants, including hawks [hunting Merlins harass the fall shorebirds, and in fall accipiters fly west off the point], and one of the Province's very finest look-out points for water and shorebirds. Offshore the two islands seem tantalizingly close, and careful 'scoping of the gravel bars and adjacent waters has turned up a formidable list of rarities over the years. In later May and again in fall Brant flocks can be expected, and both in spring and fall large numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls gather, with their flocks attracting other small gulls, particularly Little Gulls. During low water years many shorebirds accumulate about Owen Point [sometimes running around at one's feet], and from October on this is one of the best places in Ontario for seeing Purple Sandpipers. The occasional autumn sightings of jaegers are most often from Owen

Point or Gull Island, and the birds usually herald their arrival by flushing gull flocks resting on nearby gravel bars.

To the southwest are the two islands, Gull [the nearest] and High Bluff. These are off-limits during the breeding season [March 10 to September 10], and support a huge Ring-billed Gull and Double-crested Cormorant colony [130,000+ and 10,000+ birds respectively are the latest totals in the database, although these are somewhat out-of-date, and recent culls will probably have reduced the latter species' numbers], with Herring Gulls, Caspian and Common Terns, and a heronry of Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons. Many waterfowl either nest here, or summer on the offshore waters [Canada Goose, American Black Duck, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Blue and Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Redhead, Common Goldeneye, and Common and Red-breasted Merganser]. One or two pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls also nest. After the nesting season the rank cover on Gull Island can attract sparrows, with Nelson's Sharp-tailed occurring regularly; and later in autumn flocks of Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs forage the shorelines, with Snowy Owls appearing as winter approaches. Bald Eagles also appear sporadically during the winter.

High Bluff Island has recently proven to be a good place for passerine migrants, and Northern Saw-whet Owls can sometimes be found in good numbers among the island's cedar groves during late September and early October. High Bluff is only accessible by boat, after September 10<sup>th</sup>., and extreme caution should be observed during any crossings there.

From Owen Point itself the trail loops back eastwards, first running through wet poplar woodland and past a small area of marsh which can sometimes be of interest. It shortly joins the cycle path running north from the campgrounds, and ultimately returns to the trail parking lot. Along this final section of the trail are thickets of juniper, cedar, and hardwoods, interspersed with open wet and grassy areas. The varied habitats attract land bird migrants, and woodcock breed. This area, and the trail itself can easily be reached from the Park Store parking lot. This is well marked on the right at the point the main road curves left.

### **Shorebirds at Presqu'île**

Popham Beach is one of the most reliable locations in the province for shorebird migrants. Numbers may not be great [although huge

groundings are possible] but some 30 species can occur. Water level is one of the factors that determines if the birds distribute themselves along the recreational sand beaches or along the southerly natural beach. In spring birds begin appearing in mid-May and movement continues until mid-June. The most abundant species is Dunlin, with Semipalmated Plovers and Sandpipers, and these can be joined by smaller numbers of Red Knots and Whimbrel. Also regular in spring are Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, White-rumped Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher (both *griseus* and *hendersoni*).

The peak southbound shorebird migration is from mid-August to Labour Day, but a few birds may linger until freeze-up, usually in late December. Adult birds in worn plumage mingle with brightly plumaged juveniles in fall, which offers the greatest diversity and highest numbers of birds. Semipalmated Plovers, Sanderlings, and Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers predominate, followed later by Dunlin. These species are joined by Black-bellied Plover, and Pectoral, White-rumped and Baird's Sandpipers [both very regular, sometimes in numbers], a few turnstones and Red Knots, and small numbers of yellowlegs and dowitchers. Other species to be expected annually include American Golden Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, and Western, Stilt and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, with Purple Sandpipers in later fall. Almost anything can turn up [the province's first Lesser Sand-Plover was here in 1984]. After Labour Day, if the lake level is low, Chatterton Point, situated south of the campgrounds on the shore of the lake, can also be productive for shorebirds.

### **The Marsh Boardwalk**

The other sideroad along the pannes leads to the marsh boardwalk. This used to loop southwest through the marshes, curving back to the inner shoreline, with a return walk through the dense cedars bordering the marsh. There is a viewing platform at the start and a viewing tower overlooking the pools at the south end. The marsh teems with Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroats and Swamp Sparrows; and Pied-billed Grebe, both bitterns, Common Moorhen, Sora and Virginia Rail all nest, with a varied assortment of duck. Black Tern numbers have seriously declined, but Caspian Terns from the lake side forage constantly over the water. Sometimes Northern Harrier and Sedge Wrens are present.

At the time of writing the boardwalk has been closed for safety reasons, and its future is uncertain. However, the two viewing platforms are still accessible, the one at the south end reached via the path through the cedars bordering the marsh.

Returning to the main road and continuing south, past Owen Point the shoreline turns eastwards and becomes rocky. The road also curves east on to the low limestone plateau which is the 'île' part of Presqu'île, and then parallels the north shore of Presqu'île Bay, leading to the private cottage area. The road into the main body of the park soon branches off to the right, and the two roads run almost together for a short distance. The entry to the campground is on the right [south], and to the north of the roads is the main marsh. There is an observation platform overlooking this opposite the campground parking lot. This is another good location for viewing the marsh and the associated open waters.

There is no automobile access to the Park from the cottage road. However, there are feeders along it that can be productive, and waterfowl in Presqu'île Bay can be visible from it [see the section on waterfowl below].

### **The Campgrounds and the Loop Road**

The right fork into the park first passes the large campground parking lot. The bird sightings board and record book for more noteworthy sightings are here; and a feeder which is maintained and productive in the winter. The campgrounds occupy roughly the first half of the south shoreline. There are interior roads to the camping areas: the one running west along the shore passes the Pines campground, with Pine Warblers and occasional Red-headed Woodpeckers, followed by a small swamp and marsh [the 'woodpile marsh'], and ends in High Bluff campground, adjacent to Owen Point; and the one running east [often closed, but it can be walked] passes through mixed woodlands and conifer plantations. They can both be worth covering.

The main park road itself continues east and soon divides to form a large one-way loop. It first turns right [Lighthouse Lane] through a wooded section, and then east following the south shore of Presqu'île along Lake Ontario, through the day-use and picnic areas. This section is good for viewing migrant and wintering waterfowl offshore [loons and diving duck concentrate], and hawks and other migrants moving over the canopy of the woodlands to the north, although most buteos tend to by-pass the point.

The road then leads through fine mixed woodlands, passing the Nature Centre, and finally arrives at the parking lot for Lighthouse Point, or Presqu'île Point proper, site of the historic lighthouse and interpretive centre [usually closed except in summer].

### **Landbird migration at Presqu'île**

Presqu'île is second only to Prince Edward Point as a concentration point for landbird migrants on the north shore of Lake Ontario, and it has an unequalled mix of habitats in a relatively small area. If you own a bicycle, this is the perfect place for it, although the trails are off-limits to cyclists. There are many walking trails through the woods [see trail map], and on cold days in spring and fall these can sometimes be more productive than the points themselves. Certainly as the day progresses there is a tendency for migrants to disperse through the Park. However, Owen Point, the Calf Pasture [see below], and Lighthouse Point are usually the most productive locations.

At Lighthouse Point the heavy shrubby growth both on the point itself and along the paths and roads into the parking lot can be very good for migrant landbirds. Migrants also tend to disperse along Paxton Drive [the westbound leg of the loop road], and walking the first section of this can be highly productive.

At the Calf Pasture the line of willows and cedars along the shoreline bank attracts migrants, and can be especially productive on stormy days when the winds are from some quarter of the south.

Owen Point is usually less productive, but migrants can be found in the poplar woods backing the point, the line of willows, and sometimes concentrating in the willow scrub at the tip itself.

Landbird migration peaks around Victoria Day weekend [May 24±]. An excellent variety of warblers is usual, and both Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers are seen each year with Brewster's Warbler possible. Carolinian species such as Hooded Warbler occur annually. Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpeckers and Orchard Oriole are seen regularly. The more gradual autumn passerine migration continues from mid-August until about the beginning of October.

### **Paxton Drive and the Calf Pasture**

From the Lighthouse the loop road turns back westwards as Paxton Drive, and continues through scrubby cedar woodlands bordering the cottage area [the best area for gnatcatchers] before passing through more mixed woodland and reforestation. It emerges to cross an old field where a side road [Atkins Lane] leads north.

Atkins Lane crosses the field and runs under the cottage road [no automobile access] to terminate in a loop bordering Presqu'ile Bay and a small marshy embayment. This loop is bisected by the wooded bank that follows the shoreline. This entire area [known as the **Calf Pasture**] is one of the better birding spots: there are good views of the bay to the north, the marshy area in the small bay can have unexpected waterbirds [Pied-billed Grebes are often present], and the adjacent open fields are good for open country species and watching hawk movement.

### **Waterfowl migration at Presqu'ile**

In winter Presqu'ile Bay freezes solid, with the edge of the ice extending out to the area of the Lighthouse in colder periods. Typically, however, there are milder spells and more windy periods when the ice recedes back into the Bay, so that the winter passes with the ice edge constantly expanding and retreating.

As water opens up flocks of Greater Scaup and Redhead, together with the usual wintering duck, begin to appear in the open leads. As spring approaches the ice retreats further, the flocks increase to thousands of birds, and the Greater Scaup and Redheads are joined by smaller numbers of Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Ducks, Common and Hooded Merganser, Gadwalls and American Wigeon. Most of the other more common ducks appear among the flocks from time to time, and Eurasian Wigeon, Tufted Duck and Barrow's Goldeneye occur in most years. In recent years, optimum duck viewing occurred from late February until mid-March.

The Calf Pasture is the main location in the Park for viewing these flocks, and an elevated viewing stand is provided there. However, if the ice conditions are unfavorable the birds could be either much further east or west. Under these circumstances they are best seen from Bayshore Road [the cottage road]. There are three locations where close-range viewing is available from public land. The easternmost is off Salt Point, where the road curves briefly along the shoreline; next is the Government of Canada dock, which is a short distance east of the Calf Pasture; and then west of the Calf Pasture there is a small drive-off [Coot Lookout] beside the water overlooking the beginning of the marsh. The caveats with regard to courtesy and responsibility above **must** be observed along this road.

Presqu'ile Bay is not the only location for viewing waterfowl migrants. From April through May, Popham Bay attracts loons, Horned and Red-necked Grebes, some Red-breasted Mergansers and large flocks of

Green-winged Teal. Loons and grebes are more numerous off Popham Bay during September and October, and are then often joined by a large flock of scaup and other *Aythya* spp. The waters off Owen Point frequently have an even more diverse mix of waterfowl, with Brant appearing in season.

Finally, good numbers of migrants occur offshore along the south shore of the Point. These include loons, Horned Grebes, Red-breasted Mergansers, and [mainly in November, and well offshore] scoters, chiefly White-winged.

### **Jobe's Woods, and breeding birds at Presqu'île**

After Atkin's Lane Paxton Drive leads through extensive mixed woodlands, where the main nature trail [Jobe's Woods] is located. The road then returns through a reforested section to rejoin the other leg of the loop.

In summer the park is very heavily used, but it has an outstanding list of breeding birds: for example, in the first Breeding Bird Atlas the species count was the third-highest for the entire Province. Many birds are, of course, associated with the extensive marshes and huge waterbird colonies which give the Park such a distinctive character. But the exceptional range of habitats provides for an equally diverse range of nesting birds.

Jobe's Woods trail provides access to a fine mixed woodland with some swampy areas. Cerulean Warbler has summered and perhaps nested here, and Wood Duck and Pileated Woodpecker are regular along the trail. Hooded Warbler has occurred in summer elsewhere in the woods, while Red-bellied Woodpecker, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Orchard Oriole and Carolina Wren have all occurred nearer the Lighthouse, and the gnatcatcher and oriole breed regularly.

At the other extreme, the coniferous forest of the Fingers adds a northern element to the Park's avifauna, with such species as Yellow-rumped and Blackburnian Warbler nesting.

### **Winter at Presqu'île**

In winter the Point is very exposed and the surrounding lake often covered in shifting masses of ice. The campgrounds are usually closed. At these times finches may be seen in the conifers, Black-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers are occasional visitors, waterfowl [mainly Long-tailed Duck, American Goldeneye and Bufflehead] can be found in open water leads on the lake, and landbirds can be found at feeders

at the campground parking lot, outside the main park office, and on the cottage road. There are also usually small flocks of robins feeding on buckthorn, and they may be joined by waxwings of both species. Snowy Owls and 'white' gulls are regular along the shore, and Great Gray Owls have occurred.

### **NORTHUMBERLAND LAKESHORE EAST ALONG LAKE ONTARIO AND HIGHWAY 401**

For the birder travelling east from Durham the route along 401 is scenic but not especially interesting for birds, despite good habitat along the highway. The first Highway 401 access to the lakeshore in this section is at Wesleyville [exit 456]. Heading south here the road ends at Lakeshore Road, which parallels the Lake, although at some distance from it. From this point a right turn leads west to the County boundary, while a left leads to the town of Port Hope. There are a number of good birding areas along both sections, but unfortunately most are inaccessible to the general public. However, there can be good birding along the road itself, especially in winter, when it is one of the best areas in the county for wintering raptors. The area east of the hamlet of Port Britain, east of Dickinson Rd. and immediately adjacent to Haskill Rd., is one of the better locations. In Port Hope Lakeshore Road first becomes Ridout Street, and then Walton Street, with the intersection with Ontario Street described below in the centre of downtown.

To go to **Port Hope** directly, exit Highway 401 on Ontario Street south [County Road (beCR) 28; exit 464], and follow it into town, keeping right as the highway bears left on to Mill Street. Ontario Street ends at the light at Walton Street. Turn left here and then take the first right on Queen Street [0.1 km]. Drive south on Queen: the road parallels the Ganaraska River, crossing Robertson Street, and then bears right as Hayward Street. The **harbour** [which is separate from the river] is on the left 0.1 km ahead. It can yield waterfowl and gulls. The harbour mouth is accessible by following Hayward Street west as it curves around the CAMECO plant [Choate, then Marsh Streets], and then bearing left and right, passing the main plant entrance and following the road [Eldorado Place; which has now degenerated into a rough track] to its end at the combined river and harbour mouth. There are good views here of the lake, and of more possible waterfowl and gulls.

Now return to the first cross street [Robertson] and turn right, crossing the river, and continue straight ahead from the stop light at Mill Street. You are now on Peter Street [CR 2 east], and at the top of the hill [0.5 km] there is a light at Hope Street. Turn right and follow this road as it turns to follow the lake [now as Lake Street], along past a small sewage pond and a small but productive marsh to the end of the road at the mouth of **Gage's Creek**. There is lake viewing along here [loons, grebes and ducks in winter and migration] and walking trails that follow the creek north to the railroad, and the lakeshore past the marsh. The latter can be particularly productive.

**Cobourg** is some 10 km further east on CR 2, which becomes Elgin Street in town. At the first major intersection [just past the large mall on the right; Burnham/William Street; 401 exit 472] bear right on William, following CR 2, until [about 2 km] William ends as the road angles east as King Street, Cobourg's main street. Three lights further on is Division Street. Turn right, and follow the directions below.

The **harbour** area undoubtedly provides the town's best birding, and a remarkable 248 species have been recorded here. It is readily accessible via Division Street [401 Exit 474]. From here Division curves south, and finally ends in the main east pier of the harbour. This pier is an excellent vantage point for viewing much of the area. The water area is divided into two sections by a short central pier, enclosing the yacht basin on the east. The larger area of open water to the west, together with the beach along the west side of the harbour, is the part that is most attractive to birds. At present long term planning for the area calls for extension of boating docks into the westerly basin, but also for enhancement of the natural areas along the west shoreline.

The harbour is most attractive to waterfowl between October and April, when boating activity is at a minimum. There is usually some open water throughout the winter, and it attracts Long-tailed Ducks, Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes and Common Mergansers. Scaup and Red-breasted Merganser may also be present in small numbers, with individuals of other diving duck species. Semi-tame Canada Geese and Mallards are present throughout the year, and in the migration periods in particular they are often joined by American Black Ducks and other waterfowl. Most of the ducks that occur regularly in Ontario can appear in here, and it often has species present that are absent at Presqu'île. Small numbers of migrant shorebirds and open country passerines along the west shoreline add to the variety, and

raptors visit the area from time to time, with a Snowy Owl sometimes present in invasion years.

Gulls and Caspian Terns favour the breakwalls, which also attract occasional herons and shorebirds. In winter the gulls move to the ice and the deserted boat docks (500-1000 are regular in bad weather). The flocks are mainly composed of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, usually with a few Great Black-backs even in summer. Individuals of rarer species appear from time to time. In winter Glaucous and Iceland are regular, and Lesser Black-backed can be expected. Bonaparte's Gulls are often present in migration periods and into the summer. From May to September terns are usually present: In addition to the Caspians, a few Common Terns use the area for courtship display and feeding young, and Forster's Tern is recorded annually.

Automobile access to the west side of the harbour is at the foot of Hibernia Street, two blocks west of Division, and also readily accessible via a park road that runs west from the foot of Division. The open area forming the west shoreline is adjacent to the parking lot just west of the marina. The headland attracts migrant sparrows including Nelson's Sharp-tailed, but in migration a wide range of species can occur, as the area can act as a migrant trap, particularly on foggy days. At the base of this headland area [the north end] is Cobourg Ecology Garden. This small area of trees and shrubs forms an island of heavier cover, and its attractiveness to landbird migrants is quite out of proportion to its size.

The beach strand to the west is also used by loitering gulls and shorebirds, and the beach itself is botanically interesting with Seaside Spurge (*Euphorbia polygonifolia*), Great Lakes Cinquefoil (*Potentilla paradoxa*) and an exceptionally fine stand of Sea Rocket (*Cakile edentula*).

The Lake Ontario shoreline is an important flightline for both migrant land and waterbirds, and the visitor should be alert to these movements when visiting the harbour, as it is an excellent vantage point for viewing them. At times migrants will also gather in the trees around the Coast Guard station on the pier. Hawks, especially falcons and accipiters, are a special feature of the fall migration.

Although the harbour is the most productive area, there are other good birding locations in town. The first major intersection south of Highway 401, from either the Burnham or Division Street exits, is Elgin Street. Just east of the Burnham/William intersection (behind the Best

Western Inn) is **James Cockburn Park**, which has an area of cedar bush and [further to the east] a strip of wooded bottomland along Cobourg Creek. Migrant passerines may occur here in season, and the usual breeding birds are present. The park has a small parking lot, with an entrance on the south side of Elgin 0.6 km east of Burnham, and the most interesting part of the park is south-east of here. Further east on Elgin (1.2 km) is **Union Cemetery** on the north side of the road. There are tall conifers here and an overgrown bank along the rear boundary, and these areas also can be good for migrants.

There are more good birding areas on the west side of town. Burnham Street ends at the Elgin Street light, with William Street continuing south-eastwards. William ends at King Street. To go west on King, make a right hand turn at the King/William light. Continue west to the first side street on the south, Forth Street. This runs south for a block, and then continues into **Peace Park**, a small strip of parkland along Cobourg (Factory) Creek. This again can be good for migrants. The creek is usually partly open even in winter, and kingfishers are sometimes present. The gatherings of American Black Ducks and Mallards here can often yield strays of other species, and in the warmer weather Black-crowned Night-Herons roost in the trees on the south bank.

Further west on King Street, the road jogs north and then continues west as **Pebble Beach** Drive. The first side street north here (Glen Watford Road) curves around to end in a cul-de-sac. At present there is an area of cedar bush, mixed woodland and sandy open ground to the west at this point. This is private property, but public access is allowed and it is good for migrant landbirds. The open areas are interesting botanically with Bottle and Fringed Gentians (*Gentiana andrewsii* and *Gentianopsis crinita*), Centuary (*Centaureum erythraea*), and ladies' stresses (*Spiranthes* spp.).

East of the Division Street intersection King Street heads out of town as CR 2 again. At **Darcy Street**, the first light east of Division, a right turn will lead to the lakeshore, where flat shelves of rock are used for loitering by ducks, gulls and shorebirds, and in later fall Purple Sandpipers can occur.

At the east end of town is **Lucas Point**, an industrial mall on the south [just before the bridge crossing the railway]. The open fields in this area can yield hawks and occasional Snowy Owls and shrikes in winter. Normar Road, just at the start of the railway overpass, runs south to Lucas Point itself, and from here Willmott Street runs west along the

shoreline, with parkland to the south along the lake. There is a small parking lot on the south side half-way along, giving access to the network of paths and excellent lake viewing. Clumps of brush, and [at the west end] a small area of conifers attract migrant landbirds, and nesting species include Orchard Oriole.

A second cross street (Thompson) just north of the water treatment plant, passes some brushy areas which also can sometimes be good for migrants. Black-billed Cuckoo, Willow Flycatchers and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher have occurred here in summer.

CR 2 is a pleasant route east, but the sideroads south of the highway are much more productive. About 5 km east of the railroad overpass at the east end of Cobourg is **Archer's Road**, which runs south to join Lakeshore Road running east to Colborne. Cedar bush along this route can yield woodcock in the spring, and diurnal migrants follow the line of the lake.

Some 2.5 km east is **Nawautin Nature Sanctuary**, a lakeshore development of private estate homes built around an area of cedar and mixed bush centred on two ponds. There are walking trails through this area, which can attract migrants. Access is via Keewatin Dr. on the west side, and Nawautin and Shawano Roads on the east. A further  $\pm 1.5$  km on Lakeshore is Station Rd., where a left turn leads to the village of **Grafton** [401 exit 487], and a right leads to Chub Point.

**Chub Point's** main claim to fame is that on September 8, 1996 during Hurricane Fran, a Sooty Tern flew past. In fact the shoreline here bulges further out into the lake than at any spot west of Presqu'île. There is no actual point, but the road runs along the shoreline for a short way, and there is a small parking circle. Time spent here in poor weather [I've never seen much at other times] with winds out of some quarter of south, can yield waterbirds following the shore, and both Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers have been recorded. The fields to the north of the road sometimes have wet areas that can attract shorebirds.

The name of Lakeshore Road changes to Orchard Grove Road east of Station Road. Orchard Grove continues east some 4 km to **Wicklow Beach Road** which goes due south to the lake from the centre of the hamlet of Wicklow. The road then curves east along the lakeshore, and the lake at this point is good for loons and grebes in migration. The wet woodlands of **Haldimand Conservation Area** are

on the left, with a pond to the east that can yield duck, herons [including Great Egrets], especially in spring.

Orchard Grove now runs east to connect with CR 2 at **Colborne** [401 exit 497]. After passing through the hamlet of Lakeport the road turns sharp left and crosses the railroad, then right again into Colborne. Instead of turning right continue straight ahead on the gravel road [this is Ontario Street], and down the hill to the creek. Just before the culvert the **sewage lagoon** gate is on the left, and the lagoon itself is down a long drive. CR 2 is directly ahead.

Some 4 km east of Colborne the highway passes through **Salem**. Watch for the cemetery on the right: 2.2 km from this point is Barnes Road and, 1.3 km further again, Hunt Road. Barnes runs south through wet woodland and Hunt through a diversity of habitats; both are good for birds, and both end at Lakeshore Road, running east. Immediately past Hunt Road this passes a good marshy section, and then runs through a cottage community where the wet fields can sometimes attract shorebirds in spring. Eventually, some 3.7 km from the marshy area, the road jogs right and joins the **Presqu'île Park** road as the latter curves left just north of the park gate. To go to **Brighton** [401 exit 509] or to cover the marshes on the way into the park as described in the sections above, you must now turn left; to head into the park itself, turn right.

At Brighton both CR 2 and Highway 401 swing away from the lake as this curves south to Prince Edward County; however, in Brighton CR 64 [Prince Edward Street] continues south of CR 2, eventually entering Prince Edward County at Carrying Place. About 2 km south of CR 2 in Brighton, CR 64 curves east to skirt the shoreline marshes. Brighton **sewage lagoons** are on the north at this point, [directions to them from Presqu'île were given above] while to the south is a cat-tail impoundment for, I'm told, water polishing, whatever that means. This area also attracts marsh birds.

CR 64 then continues east to the Murray Canal. To cover more of the shoreline [interesting mainly in early spring], immediately after crossing the canal bear right on the sideroad to **Barcoven Beach**. [The first sideroad on the right along here ends at Presqu'île Bay, and views across to the park. It can be a useful vantage point for viewing waterfowl that are a little too far from the park side to see clearly, but hardly warrants a special trip unless something especially intriguing has been seen]. The Barcoven Beach side road also joins the shore further east, and then turns north to return to the county road. At the

point it turns there are excellent views of the entrance to **Wellers Bay** in Prince Edward County. In early spring this area of water opens up first, and can be full of ducks. [Note that parking is difficult here: it is best to park further down the road and walk back].

## **INLAND FROM THE LAKESHORE**

### **North from Port Hope on County Road 28**

***Dale Road Sod Farm*** One of the more reliable locations in the county for migrant plover and other upland shorebirds is a sod farm situated north of Port Hope. It is most productive in the fall, when large flocks of Killdeer are often present, and may be joined by Black-bellied and American Golden-Plover, as well as other open country species. Both Upland and Buff-breasted Sandpipers occur periodically. Exit Highway 401 at CR 28 [Port Hope exit 464 north], and follow it roughly 2 km. to the light at Dale Road. Turn left here and proceed some 2.2 km west to Hawkins Road. The farm is between Hawkins and Sylvan Glen, the next sideroad to the west, both running north from Dale Road.

***Garden Hill Conservation Area*** is a large pond that is very attractive to waterfowl in migration periods. Large numbers of Canada Geese gather until freeze-up and again in spring, and other geese and ducks associate with these flocks. Where mudflats have developed a few shorebirds can often be found as well. To reach the pond, exit Highway 401 at CR 28 [Port Hope exit 464 north], and follow it roughly 13 km. to CR 9. Turn left here and proceed some 5.5 km west to Mill Street, where the pond lies on the NW corner, and the parking for the area lies a short distance further west. Note also that following CR9 east from CR 28, towards the villages of Gores Landing and Harwood, takes you through some of the most dependable habitat in the county for Upland Sandpipers.

### **North from Cobourg on County Road 45**

One area that is particularly productive during the breeding season is Peter's Woods, a superb old woodlot some 25 km. north of Cobourg. Its significance has been recognized for many years, and it was acquired by Willow Beach Field Naturalists in the 1970's. It is named for A.B. (Peter) Schultz, a leading club member who was instrumental in the acquisition. It was subsequently turned over to the Ministry of Natural Resources as a Provincial Nature Reserve, and is now administered by the Club on behalf of MNR.

The route to Peter's Woods can be rewarding as well, as it runs through the Northumberland County Forest, and can yield some species I have not encountered in the woods themselves, so this

account will describe both the woods and a possible circle route to them.

Take Highway 401 Exit 474, the eastern exit for Cobourg, set your odometer at zero, and drive north on CR 45. All the distances given below are from this point. You first pass through the hamlet of Baltimore, and then (between 7 and 11 km.) the road follows the heavily wooded course of Baltimore Creek. The sideroads on either side of the highway here can be productive, especially Bull Road at 9.3 km. It's not necessary to drive far, and indeed most of the roads are dead-ends. Walking them for a short distance is often more interesting. You can expect a good mix of warblers, including Black-throated Green, Nashville, Black-and-white and Canada, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, and Common Yellowthroat, together with Winter Wren, White-throated Sparrow and Purple Finch, Alder Flycatcher in the alder thickets and Swamp Sparrow in the marshy sections. All three accipiters occur and probably breed, as does Broad-winged Hawk, while Red-tailed can be found in more open areas.

On leaving the low-lying wooded areas along the highway some of the sideroads open up, with sandy old fields that attract Brown Thrashers, and Field and Vesper Sparrows, and Bank Swallows nest in some of the old sand banks. Pioneer Road, on the west at 8.8 km., passes one such area.

Continuing northeast, note the Centreton Road on the east at 11.5 km., as you will return to this point, and soon afterwards (at about 12 km.) the highway enters **Northumberland County Forest**, a huge area of mainly conifer plantations. At 14 km. on the west is Beagle Club Road [see below]. The tall pines along the highway should readily yield Pine Warbler, and a more careful search can produce Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush and Solitary Vireo. In recent years sightings of Common Ravens have also become increasingly frequent. However, the exceptionally lush growth of poison ivy which dominates the ground cover (often to the exclusion of anything else), can inhibit exploration if you are susceptible to it. Poison ivy could well be adopted as the official plant of the county, as it grows in remarkable abundance!

Although **Beagle Club Road** is not part of the route described below, it is worth noting as it gives access to the network of ski trails through the forest, and also leads to other birding areas in the Forest. The parking lot for the ski trails is well marked down a short sideroad on the west, and this network of trails gives good access to the forest

interior. Some distance further on Bowmanton Road crosses Beagle Club, and a left turn here leads through extensive conifer plantations as well.

Both the Baltimore Creek area and Northumberland County Forest can be particularly good areas for winter finches in season, when the ivy is no longer a problem.

At 18.9 km. turn right on CR 29, signed to Warkworth, and then right again on the second sideroad (22 km., McDonald Road). A small marshy area on both sides of the road immediately after the turn can be worth checking for Green Heron and other wetland species. Then continue south; from 23 km. on watch for Eastern Bluebirds along the fencelines on the left, until finally the road goes down a hill into a wooded area, and at 24.1 km. there is a driveway on the left. You have arrived at ***Peter's Woods***.

In addition to the small parking lot, there is a privy and the walking trail [0.8 km.] through the woods. Walking is also permitted in the areas of old field and early succession to the northeast, but in the main woodlot persons are asked to keep to the marked trail. Users should be aware that this trail is not a typical manicured Provincial park one: there is some scrambling over deadfalls, parts of the path are boggy (we often wear rubber boots) and the access points to the small bridges that cross the stream are rather steep and can be very slippery.

The first section runs through an area of young pines and second growth (watch and listen for Golden-winged, Blue-winged and Mourning Warblers); and then enters the main woods, looping round to follow both sides of an intermittent stream that runs through the area. At the eastern end is a boggy area with coniferous growth (you should be alert for possible American Woodcock feeding here; around post 6). The rest of the woods is mainly deciduous, with a very rich ground flora and some fine old trees including a few magnificent white pines (listen for Pine Warbler).

You should encounter a good mix of typical woodland birds including Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy and Pileated Woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Brown Creeper, Veery, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo (a positive chorus of their song), Black-throated Green and Black-and white Warblers, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Purple Finch. You can hope to hear Ruffed Grouse.

In late May 1995 the woods played host for a time to both a Kentucky Warbler and a Louisiana Waterthrush, both of which frequented the area of the stream west of the first bridge, and a Black-throated Blue Warbler was also on territory towards the far end of the trail. More southern species which are probably more regular in occurrence are Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Yellow-throated Vireo, the latter on the return leg of the loop near the large bench, although I expect it (the bird!) moves around from year to year. The bench, incidentally, looks strange but is an excellent vantage point for viewing the very high canopy.

The old field areas to the north and east have their own birds of interest. A pair of Eastern Phoebes nests on the privy, bluebirds may nest in boxes along the fenceline and Brown Thrashers and Eastern Towhees can be found in the thickets, with Grasshopper Sparrows in the field itself.

South of the drive into the woods the main road jogs west, and an old cart track continues east from it, following the southern boundary of the reserve. A walk along here will yield a rather different mix of species, as well as many of those already seen in the woods. Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers have occurred here too, and you can expect Least Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided and Mourning Warblers and Indigo Buntings.

Leaving the area, follow McDonald Road as it jogs south once more, to run through the eastern part of Northumberland County forest. After some 3 km. the forest ends and the rest of the route runs through a typical mix of woods and farmland (watch for bluebirds), finally arriving at Centreton (5 km. from the woods), where a right turn on CR 22 leads back to CR 45 again.

Obviously a more direct route is to use CR 45 and the Centreton road both ways, but the above provides a little more variety, and is only marginally longer.

### **North from Colborne on County Road 25**

One of the County's finest wetlands inland from the lake is ***Lone Pine Marsh***, which is administered by the Lone Pine Marsh land trust. This created by Murial Braham when there was a threat to the marsh some years ago. Lone Pine is situated north of the village of Colborne on CR 21. Exit at Highway 401 Exit 497 and drive north some 3.5 km. to CR

21 on the east. Turn right, and drive 1.6 km to the first sideroad north [Maple Grove]. The marsh lies between this and the next road to the east [Cowie]. There is parking about 1 km up Maple Grove, and access from the corner of Maple Grove and CR 21. A trail starting from this point leads to a viewing tower at the north end of the marsh, which has the full suite of breeding marsh species.

## **North from Brighton on County Road 30**

*By Don Shanahan*

The **Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area** is located about 15 km north of Brighton and is operated under the stewardship of the Lower Trent Region Conservation Authority. Consisting of short grass prairie, mixed coniferous-deciduous woods growing on one of Ontario's largest eskers, and riverine woods, Goodrich-Loomis offers a pleasant mixture of breeding birds showing both northern and southern affinities. Birding is best from mid-May until mid-July. From June on, mosquitoes can become intense. As some of the trails are convoluted, pick up a trail map at the entrance. Poison Ivy is abundant. Admission is free but a voluntary donation box is located near the pamphlet rack.

Directions to Goodrich Loomis and other points north below are from just south of the Highway 401 exit 509. Proceed north on CR 30. At 4.9 km, Donaldson's Road turns right and runs past 0.6 km of pastureland. [Drivers should note that the Donaldson's turn is hidden and quite sharp]. This area usually offers easy access to habitat for Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Bluebird, Field, Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlark.

At 6.5 km, CR 30 intersects with Goodrich Road on the left and CR 41 on the right. Follow Goodrich Road west, where you will find mixed woods beside the road between 7.6 and 8.1km. These woods can have Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl and Barred Owl, which often can be heard from the roadside. Watch the fields on the right from this point until 9.0 km for Wild Turkey. Goodrich Road turns sharply right at 8.6 km and becomes Pinewood School Road. Continuing along Pinewood School Road you will encounter Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area's main entrance at 9.6 km. The parking lot area and adjacent fields for the next kilometer are good for American Kestrel, Black-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Bluebird, Indigo Bunting, and Vesper, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. The Esker Trail can be accessed from the main entrance and at its beginning has Nashville and Yellow Warblers. Otherwise, this trail

provides a scenic route to the more productive Loop D'Loop trail network.

A short cut to the Loop D' Loop trails can be accessed by driving past the conservation area's main entrance on Pinewood School Road. Spring nights in the vicinity of 11.5 km usually produce Whip-poor-will. This area is also good for short grass species. On the left at 11.9 km, you will encounter a maintenance road leading to the junction of the Esker Trail and the Loop D'Loop system. This road is rough and it is best to park on Pinewood School Road. Using a trail map, turn right at the trail junction and follow the winding Loop D' Loop circuit. Starting on the forested esker, you will descend into wet hemlock woods, walk parallel to Cold Creek, then ascend to rejoin the Esker Trail.

Birds nesting in or about this area include Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo (uncommon), Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Black-throated Blue Warbler (uncommon), Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, Canada Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, White-throated Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Purple Finch. The upper reaches of Cold Creek appear to be a prime spot for the discovery of breeding Louisiana Waterthrush.

The Loop D'Loop system passes a bridge that crosses Cold Creek to join the wetter Beaver Trail. The wet area across the creek is good for American Woodcock and Mourning and Canada Warblers. The Beaver Trail follows the creek downstream to another bridge crossing Cold Creek. The pines to the south of this junction are good for Hermit Thrush and Pine Warbler, and the area immediately around the bridge is dependable for Willow Flycatcher and Mourning Warbler. Great Blue Heron, Spotted Sandpiper and Belted Kingfisher can be encountered anywhere along Cold Creek. Once the bridge is crossed, the trail parallels the creek moving upstream to reunite with the Loop D'Loop system.

By proceeding back to the junction of County Road 30 and the Goodrich Road, birders can drive to the area's most dependable spot for observing Wild Turkey. Simply re-set your odometer to zero at this point. The eastbound route from this intersection is CR 41. Drive 3.6 km east and turn left at Grosjean Road. At 4.7 km, Grosjean Road changes to Cowan Road which proceeds north for another kilometer, where, at the intersection with Jamieson Road (or 5.7 km), Cowan

Road turns into Cameron Road. This area opens up into corn fields that usually produce Horned Lark and Vesper and Savannah Sparrows in spring and early summer. A hydro transmission line crosses the road at 6.2 km, and from here on Wild Turkeys may be seen on both sides of the road. At 7.0 km, farm buildings are located by the edge of the road on each side. The hill on the left leading from the forest's edge down to a small pasture is particularly dependable for Wild Turkeys that often forage in the pasture with a variety of barnyard animals.

From 7.7 to 10.0 km, Cameron Road can have Northern Saw-whet Owl in winter and Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl and Barred Owl at other times of the year. All property adjacent to the road is private; however, owling at night can be done quite adequately from the roadside. Towards the end of this stretch, the large Murray Marsh is visible to the right. Though Green Heron, Wood Duck, Red-shouldered Hawk, Black-billed Cuckoo, the above mentioned owls, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Fox Sparrow and Rusty Blackbird have been seen in this area, the most intriguing aspect of the Murray Marsh is that it remains largely unexplored by birders.

To get to accessible parts of the ***Murray Marsh***, follow Cameron Road until 10.9 km where it meets Goodfellow Road. Turn right and drive past farm fields until 12.4 km, where Osprey usually nest to the right on an artificial platform. At 13.0 km, a farmhouse on the left has numerous feeders that have produced both Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpeckers in winter. The edges of cornfields past the farmhouse have nest boxes that are usually occupied by Eastern Bluebird. Cameron Road turns sharply to the left at 13.2 km. The lane continuing straight ahead provides foot access to the Murray Marsh. When fallow, fields to the right of this intersection usually have Horned Lark and Vesper Sparrow. Cameron Road past the "Murray Marsh Natural Habitat area" sign becomes rougher and should not be driven before April. From 13.7 until 14.0 km, the road passes through wet woods. At 14.5 km, a large expanse of cattail marsh is visible on the right. The road dead ends at 15.2 km at the Habitat Area's parking lot. American Bittern, Least Bittern, Green Heron, Northern Harrier, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Yellowthroat and Swamp Sparrow can be readily encountered in or about the cattail marsh. A trail leads uphill from the parking lot to a promontory overlooking Bradley Bay on the Trent Canal system. Turkey Vulture and Osprey can usually be seen from this vantage point.

