

an identifying feature. The field marks mentioned above are quite visible on the photos and confirm the bird as the Bullock's Oriole.

LITTLE SHEARWATER REPORTED:

by John Hayden

The bird was resting on salt water ice close to the west shore line where Irvings bar points into Pownall Bay on the Earncliffe - Cherry Valley Peninsula. It was January 23rd, 2000, a bright, sunny, very cold day with a wind chill of -30 degrees. The bird on the ice was about the size of a Green-winged Teal and seemed to have its feathers puffed out due to the extreme cold. It had to run 8 to 12 feet on the ice surface with its wings open to get airborne. It flew close to the ice surface (1 to 2 feet) with hurried, full wing beats. Its pointed wings reached wide when flying.

The head and top part of the bird was black (not shiny black). It had much white underneath but it flew too low to see well. It had a white throat and at least mostly white under the tail. It had a two stage black bill and blue (not dark blue) legs with web feet set well back on the body. The blue legs were very distinctive when running for take off.

[*Editor's note:* These details are taken from John's Species Documentation Form. He approached the bird from behind to within 1 metre. The bird was flushed three times with the first flight being 20 m, the second 30 m, and the third 300 m. No photographs were obtained].

AGGRESSIVE CROW BEHAVIOUR OBSERVED:

by Jackie LeBlanc

Hi there! I just thought I'd drop you a line to tell you about something strange that happened last night. I have lived in the West Royalty area for the past four years. We have a regular group of crows that hangs out there in the small wooded area near the apartments. On Last night, at least 20 crows were gathered near my patio and they seemed to be having a huge fight. I've loved watching crows for years, and have seen them do some pretty intimidating things to my cats and to some of the dogs in the area, but I've never seen them be so violent amongst themselves.

They kept dive-bombing at each other and knocking each other off tree branches, then wrestling one another on the ground. At one point three crows ganged up on one, knocked him to the ground and pounced on him. They kept him to the ground for at least 20 minutes, with all three holding him, pecking at him, and flipping him over. It was really scary! The whole group was frenzied and making a whole lot of noise, but the four on the ground wouldn't let up. I tried to shoo them away, but they didn't budge. The "victim" finally got away, but his wing looked like it was broken or something. At another point, a single crow wrestled another crow to the ground and gave him a good beating, too. This "victim" had a big lump on his chest when he finally got away.

What's going on here? I tried making a few calls last night but nobody was around to take any. I was afraid that the crows might have contracted some kind of illness that makes animals more aggressive. This morning, I finally spoke to someone from the P.E.I. Fish and Wildlife Department, and he told me that this was not typical behaviour for crows, but that the group was probably showing signs of overpopulation in that area instead of manifesting signs of illness.

I feel better now, but I wish I had taken video of the crows. I will if it happens again. The crows have been a lot more aggressive this spring, so I wouldn't be surprised if I caught them at it again.

