

The
KINGBIRD



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HISTORY OF NEW YORK STATE ORNITHOLOGY

JOHN B. BELKNAP and ALLEN H. BENTON, Editors

Editors' Preface

This is the first of a projected series which will trace the study of birds in New York State from colonial times to the twentieth century with emphasis on biographies of those who have made significant contributions to ornithology. In this first article the Albany and lower Hudson area has been touched on very briefly since this will be covered in a forthcoming paper by Dr. Minnie B. Scotland.

The aid of all readers of *The Kingbird* and members of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs is urgently solicited in forwarding this project. Needed are such things as material relative to local and county lists, information on persons not well known to historians, and sources of biographical data. Anyone wishing to prepare a sketch on a particular person should make this known. As an initial specific request, information is needed on Jacob P. Giraud Jr., the author in 1844 of *Birds of Long Island*. Correspondence may be directed to the senior editor at 92 Clinton Street, Gouverneur, or the junior editor at New York State Teachers College, Albany.

The Colonial Period

John B. Belknap

When in 1609 Henry Hudson sailed up the river which now bears his name, the territory comprising New York State was for the most part heavily forested. The type of forest cover varied due to differences in soil, altitude and climate. Hardwoods such as beech, maple, birch, basswood and ash predominated in many areas with spruce and fir being found at higher elevations. Hemlock and white pine were the most widely distributed of the conifers. The trees in the lower Hudson valley were mainly oak, chestnut, white and pitch pine. On Long Island could be found oak and pitch pine together with more southerly varieties such as sweet gum, holly and persimmon.

Two grassland areas, one on Long Island and one in western New York, were exceptions to the general rule. The former, called the Hempstead Plains, was a favored habitat for the Eastern Pinnated Grouse or Heath Hen. The other area, known as the Genesee country, consisted of an extensive tract of swamp grassland together with open woodland, much of it oak. It contains fertile soil easy of cultivation, woods free of undergrowth, and extensive meadowlands.

Although cutting down the forest began with the earliest settlement, it was some time before serious inroads were made on the forest cover of the state. Clearing the land was hard, slow work. In 1700 it is estimated that there were 25,000 white people in New York State, most of them on Long Island and in the lower Hudson valley, about one person for each two square miles of land in the state.

While the Dutch were settling the southeastern part of the state, French explorers began penetrating our territory from the north. It was not long

before they had set up a flourishing fur trade with the Indians. Making use of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes, the French established forts and trading posts at strategic points and maintained control over a considerable part of New York State until the end of the French and Indian wars.

It is possible to make conjectures about the bird life of the state during this period based on statements of contemporary writers together with a knowledge of conditions which existed prior to major changes resulting from European occupation. The clearing of large areas of land and putting them to agricultural uses resulted in great changes to bird life. The creation of many miles of "edge" was an important factor. Some species benefited while others were adversely affected. For the most part birds that were able to adapt themselves have flourished, many now being much more numerous than they were 300 years ago.

The early settlers were mainly concerned with game birds and most early references were confined to this group. As would be expected, our ancestors were more concerned with practical values than with scientific inquiry. Early French explorers, notably Samuel de Champlain and Pierre Radisson, who travelled in what is now New York, made brief mention of game birds. An interesting tale of the capture of a live bird is contained in the account of the voyage of Count Frontenac on the St. Lawrence River in 1673. The event took place in the Thousand Island region and is quoted as follows: "We had the pleasure to catch a small loon, a bird about as large as a European bustard *Outarde* of the most beautiful plumage, but so difficult to be caught alive, as it plunges constantly under water, that it is no small rarity to be able to take one. A cage was made for it, and orders were given to endeavor to raise it, in order to be able to send it to the king." (Recounted in Franklin B. Hough, 1853, History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, New York, 36.)

An early list of birds occurring in southern Canada is to be found in the writings of Baron Armand Louis de Lahontan (1667-1715). At that time southern Canada included portions of New York State and, since Lahontan travelled within our borders, it may properly be assumed that some of his observations were made there. He spent seven years in Canada, first as a common soldier, later becoming an officer. Being interested in nature he acquired a general knowledge of animals and birds and wrote extensively of his observations. He gave us one of the earliest accounts of the drumming of the ruffed grouse. His list of birds of the "south countries of Canada" includes 23 species or families.

Despite the fact that New York State was a battleground during much of the eighteenth century, the clearing of forests and settlement of the land continued at an accelerated pace. The Schoharie and Mohawk valleys were occupied prior to the Revolution. The Genesee country was settled rapidly following the war. By 1794 most of the Indians in the state were on reservations. At this time the white population was about 350,000 and the eastern part of the state, except the more mountainous regions, was pretty well settled.

The impact of civilization had a definite effect on bird life during this period. Certain game birds, notably the Heath Hen, Wild Turkey and

Passenger Pigeon became scarce in the vicinity of centers of population. Game laws were passed as early as 1708 but little attention was paid to them. The Heath Hen was nearly extirpated in the state by 1800. The destruction of forests combined with unrestricted shooting made the Wild Turkey scarce in settled areas. The same factors sealed the fate of the Passenger Pigeon, although the sad story of its final destruction belongs to the nineteenth century.

Scientific interest in natural history gained impetus during the eighteenth century, mainly in Europe but to a lesser degree in this country. Botany led the way followed by the other natural sciences. During this period Linnaeus laid the foundation for the classification of plant and animal life. One of the first men in America to learn and endorse the Linnaean system was Cadwallader Colden. A Scotchman by birth, Colden spent most of his life in New York and was one of the leading scientific men of his day. He gives us the following picture of the forests of eastern New York at the time he served as surveyor general of the colony (1738): "The southern part of the country [Hudson Valley] to within twenty miles of Albany is generally covered with oaks of several sorts, intermixed with wallnuts, chestnuts and almost all sorts of timber. The Mohawk's country is generally covered with beech, maple and elm." (Recounted in 1851, Documentary History of New York IV, 172.)

Most of the writing on birds in our state during the eighteenth century was done by travelers. Some were soldiers like Thomas Anburey and Sir Charles Bragden, others were missionaries to the Indians as Gideon Hawley and George Loskiel, still others visitors such as Peter Kalm. There was, however, one resident observer who spent most of his life in New York State. Hector de Crevecoeur was born in France, came to America at the age of nineteen and settled in Orange County. He is remembered for his "Letters of an American Farmer," published in London in 1782 and containing numerous references to his observations on birds.

In concluding this account of the early period in New York State ornithology mention should be made of John and William Bartram. John Bartram, the father (1699-1777), made his home near Philadelphia and travelled extensively, collecting plants and observing nature. In 1743 he journeyed to Onondaga (Syracuse) and Oswego, writing a detailed account of his observations. William Bartram, his son (1739-1823) is credited with being the first scientific American ornithologist. In his early years William spent some time in New York State, making at least one trip through the Catskills with his father. He became a leading botanist and ornithologist and is best known for his "Travels through North and South Carolina." His principal contribution to ornithology is his "Catalogue of Birds of North America" in which 215 species are listed.

FOLK NAMES OF NEW YORK BIRDS: I

By W. L. McATEE

Thomas Penant, the British naturalist, in his "Arctic Zoology," 1785, recorded 101 species of birds from New York State and gave popular names for several of them. That was a good start, but when Gurdon Trumbull of Connecticut came along, he combed the shores of Long Island for his "Names and Portraits of Birds which Interest Gunners," a book published in 1888, to which we owe much of what we know of this subject.

The present list, a gathering from these and other books and from a variety of sources, is extracted from a large manuscript by the writer on "American Bird Names, Their Histories and Meanings," which seems unlikely to be published in its entirety. An effort is being made, therefore, to publish local representations of the folk names — the most interesting part of all. The card catalogues on which these reports are based may be consulted for fuller details in the Fuertes Memorial Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Compilation ceased with the year 1947, hence names first published after that year will not be found herein. Many unpublished names are included, however, that were obtained by field research and from answers to questionnaires.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Common Loon. Big loon; big ring-neck loon (the greenish-black throat of adults is interrupted by a more or less complete collar of sharply-defined vertical white streaks); diver; great loon; hell-diver (in reference to its uncanny diving ability); loon (probably from a common cry, ah-loo, repeated); sea loon; wheel-barrow (from its labored take-off into flight).

Red-throated Loon. Gray loon.

Holboell's Grebe. Bastard loon (too big for a grebe, too small for a loon; it might be a hybrid); hell-diver (see note under common loon); sheldrake loon (the loon-like bird that resembles a sheldrake or merganser, at least in size).

Horned Grebe. Dipper (as a habitual diver); hell-diver (see note under common loon); pink-eyed diver (the iris is red); water-witch (refers to the bird's uncanny diving ability. This name was recorded for New York by Pennant in 1785).

Pied-billed Grebe. Dabchick (the bird that *dabs* or *dives*; of old usage for the little grebe in Great Britain, where recorded as early as 1667, Merrett); didapper (a shortening of *dive-dapper*, both parts of which refer to diving. Similarly traceable to 1565-1567 in Great Britain, Oxford English Dictionary); dipper (—diver); hell-diver (see note under common loon); hen-beaked wigeon (Pennant 1785. *Wigeon* here means duck, a misnomer often applied to this bird. *Hen-beaked* signifies that its bill is similar in shape to that of the domestic fowl); mud-duck (any small water bird may be called a duck; this one associated with mud by some observers); water-witch (see note under the preceding species).

Sooty Shearwater. Black hagdon, hag (the bird is dark sooty-brown above; hagdon is from hagdown, an English term, the derivation of which is unknown; "hag," by itself, doubtless has some derogatory significance).

Great Shearwater. Hagdon (see preceding note).

Leach's Petrel. Mother Carey's chicken (chicken, a bird; for the remainder of the name, a variety of derivations have been suggested; one having dictionary (NID) sanction is that the term is an Anglicization of the Latin, *Mater Cara* (Esteemed Mother) applied to the Virgin Mary, patroness of sailors. As these birds are regarded as portents of trouble, however, the connection does not seem too clear. A popular explanation is: "Mother Carew was an old witch . . . good at raising the wind . . . The sailors will not shoot [the petrels] on any account; they pay them great respect, that their mother's wrath may not be roused" (Mactaggart, 1829, I, 12).

Storm Petrel. Black imp (except for the white rump, the bird is most dark; "imp" agrees with numerous associations of petrels with evil powers, as they are supposed

to be harbingers of storms); Mother Carey's chicken (see note under the preceding species); stormy (a familiar form of the standard name, perhaps known only to the book-learned).

Wilson's Petrel. Mother Carey's chicken (see note under Leach's petrel).

Gannet. That name is in general use along the coast. It is an old word known from the epic of Beowulf, about 1000 A. D.; and comes from the same root as gander.

Common Cormorant. Nigger goose; shag (see notes under the following species).

Double-crested Cormorant. Nigger goose (in allusion to its color and to its goose-like appearance, especially when in flight in the V-formation so closely associated with the Canada goose); sea-crow (though seen upon the sea, the cormorant has no resemblance to a crow except in color); shag (by transfer from England, where this name of long usage refers to the shaggy crest).

Great Blue Heron. Blue crane; crane (herons are commonly miscalled cranes); high-boy (in allusion to its tall stature); old Job (Job is a commiserative term, apparently suggested by the heron's scrawniness; old an adjective of familiarity).

American Egret. White bird; white crane (color is mostly white; herons are commonly miscalled cranes).

Snowy Egret. White crane (see the preceding note); white quawk (the term quawk, suggestive of the raucous vocalization of herons, is most frequently applied to the black-crowned night heron).

Little Blue Heron. Blue crane; little blue crane (general color of the body and wings of adults is dark bluish-gray; herons are commonly miscalled cranes); little white crane, white crane (immature birds are chiefly white).

Green Heron. Blue bittern (in high plumage, the elongated feathers of the back are bluish; the name bittern is applied to various herons other than those to which it properly belongs); blue Peter (see preceding note; "Peter" a familiar or "pet" name. The combination is more frequently bestowed on the American coot and for a definite reason); fly-up-the-creek (it is seen along small streams more frequently than are other herons); skowk (imitation of a cry often made by the bird when it is flushed).

Black-crowned Night Heron. Blue heron (color of adults above is largely pale, bluish-gray); meadow-hen (a sizable bird, thus a "hen", that frequents meadows, in the New England sense of wet grasslands); qua-bird, quack, quawk, quawker, quok, squawk (all of these names are descriptive of a common call).

American Bittern. Dunkadoo (imitation of a common note; many bittern names are so derived; others in this list are labelled merely "sonic"); hethen (that is, heathen, heath being used as a synonym for marsh); hit-log (at a distance the notes suggest resonant pounding); Indian pullet (a sizable bird that might have been poultry of the Indians; the common significance of the name, however, is small wild hen); look-up (from the bird's pose when "freezing"; although the bill points upward, the eyes look forward); marsh hen, meadow hen (a sizable bird of marshes or meadows); mud hen (a good-sized bird of muddy environment); plum-pudden, punk-pudding (sonic); stake-driver, stump-knocker (at a distance the notes suggest resonant pounding); thunder-pump (the notes suggest the sounds made by an old-fashioned suction-pump but they are hardly as loud as thunder).

Whistling Swan. Wild swan.

Canada Goose. Brant (sometimes this distinguishes the subspecies hutchinsi); common goose; gray goose; honker (from its notes); mud goose (a special name for the Hutchins subspecies); white-breasted goose (to distinguish it from the sea brant with its black breast, though the Canada's breast is not always white); wild goose.

American Brant. Brant, leatherhead (deemed hard to kill).

Snow Goose. White brant; white goose.

Mallard. Gray duck; gray mallard (these two names sometimes mean only the female, but are often applied to the species); greenhead (only the adult male has a green head); mallard (in olden usage this meant only the male; the female was the duck; and the species duck and mallard).

Black Duck. Black mallard or simply "black" (these names are in general use though the general color of the bird is dusky-brown rather than black); coot (perhaps as resembling in color female sea-coots or scoters); dusky duck (Latham 1785); long-necker black; marsh duck; old duck; redleg (adult males have the reddest legs); short-necked black (this and an earlier term to the opposite effect may reflect a popular trend to recognize two kinds of black ducks; scientists tried that too, but the present view is that all the differences are related to sex and/or degree of maturity).

Gadwall. Creek duck (from its preference for small waters); gadwall (rather widely used, etymology unknown); gray duck (the male is predominantly grayish); speckle-belly (the breast of the male has dark scale-like markings, but the belly in both sexes is glaringly white, especially as seen in flight); widgeon (a name applied rather generally to medium-sized ducks, and even to other birds, but recognized as standard only for the baldpates).

Pintail. Bluebill (a name reported by Peter Kalm in 1748; the bill of the adult male is in part bluish-gray); gray duck (sometimes means only the female); longtail duck (the middle tail feathers of the male are conspicuously elongated); marsh duck; peaked-tail, pentail (see preceding note); pied gray duck (the male); pile-start (transliteration of the name *pylstaart* in the Dutch edition of Kalm's *Travels*, 1773. Freely translated, it means lance-tail and is in allusion to the long pointed tail of the male); pintail (a general name, also in British provincial use; refers to the long, pointed tail of the male); spindle-tail; spreet-tail (these two names have a similar reference; 'spreet' is dialect for sprit, the stay of the mainsail of a small boat); sprig; sprig-tail (two more names referring to the long tail of the male); winter duck (also in British provincial use, Smellie 1793).

Green-winged Teal. Common teal; green-wing (only the speculum is green); winter teal (as being present in more severe weather than is the blue-wing); teal; teal duck.

Blue-winged Teal. Blue-wing (the wing coverts, and in the male, adjacent feathers, are light blue); summer teal (in southern migration, it arrives early, usually in August); teal; teal duck.

European Widgeon. English widgeon; marsh duck; widgeon.

Baldpate. That name is in general use (the head of the male, bill to crown, is white, but not bald); gray duck; marsh duck; white-face (see first note); widgeon; widgeon duck.

Shoveler. Most of the folk-names of this bird refer to its spatulate bill. Those in general use or definitely recorded for New York are: broadbill, shovel-bill, shoveler, shovel-nose, spoonbill, spoonbill duck, and spoony.

Wood Duck. That name and the contraction, "woody," are known for New York. The bird perches on trees, nests in their cavities, and lives mostly in wooded swamps.

Redhead. That name is in general use (the head and upper neck of the male are reddish-chestnut); red-head duck; red-headed broadbill (to distinguish it from the scaups known also as broadbills).

Canvasback. That name is general, as are also the nicknames, "can", "canvas", and "cannie" (the coloration of the back suggests the fabric, *canvas*); canvas duck; Seetock duck (spelled also Seetog duck; for a stream tributary to Great South Bay, that was especially frequented by these birds).

Ring-necked Duck. Bastard broadbill (recognized as allied to the scaups or broadbills, but yet different, so deemed a hybrid); blackhead (another name shared with the scaups. The head of the male is black, but with varied metallic reflections); marsh bluebill (scaups also are called bluebills; this one thought to be more of a marsh, than a bay, frequenter); ringbill or ring-bill duck (from the pale crossband near the front end of the bill, present in both sexes).

Greater Scaup. Bay blackhead (the head, neck, and upper breast of the male are black, with greenish reflections); bay broadbill (the bill, about an inch across near the tip, is perhaps relatively broader than in its allies); big blackhead; big bluebill (the bill is dull blue or lead-color); big broadbill; blackhead; bluebill; bluebill duck; broadbill; broadbill duck, broadbill widgeon (almost any medium-sized duck may be called a widgeon); deep-water broadbill; greater blue-bill; lake blue-bill, faker (Lake Ontario terms); mussel duck (from feeding on mussels; also in British use); winter broadbill.

Lesser Scaup. Blackhead (the head of the male is black, with purplish gloss); bluebill; bluebill duck (same explanation as under the preceding species); broadbill; creek broadbill (from preferring smaller water than does the preceding species or bay broadbill); little blackhead; little bluebill; little broadbill; marsh bluebill; mud broadbill; river bluebill; river broadbill; river scaup (there is little evidence of folk use of the British term "scaup" in America. It refers to the bird's feeding on scaups or scalps, that is, beds of shellfish); swamp bluebill.

Common Goldeneye. Brass-eye (the iris is pale (female), to bright (male), golden-yellow); brass-eyed whistler (latter term from the sound made by the wings in flight);

brownhead (the female and young with snuff-brown heads; that of the male is black with greenish reflections); golden-eye; great-head (the head is puffy with feathers); pied whistler (the male); whistler, whistle-wing (also in Irish local use).

Bufflehead. Butterball (from being often excessively fat); didapper (a name more generally applied to grebes; see note under pied-bill grebe); dipper (that is, a diver); hairy-crown hairy-head (there is an abundance of long soft feathers on the head); spirit duck (in reference to its "supernatural" ability in diving at the flash of an old-time gun or at the twang of a bowstring, quickly enough to avoid the missile).

Old Squaw. Cockawee, coween (in imitation of its notes); long-tailed duck (the middle tail feathers of the male are elongated); old Injun (the male, as mate to the old squaw — a more common name); old mammy; old squaw; old wife (these names refer to the bird's "garrulity"); ow-owly; south-southerly, south-south southerly (in imitation of its notes); squaw; squaw duck.

Harlequin Duck. Lord (that much of the more northeastern name, "lords and ladies", in reference to the handsome plumage of the male).

Labrador Duck. Though extinct since 1878, this species is known to have had at least the following folk names in New York: pied duck, skunk duck, and skunk-head. All had reference to its bold black and white markings.

Common Eider. Big sea duck; black and white coot; eider; Isles of Shoals duck (from a wintering ground off the coast of New Hampshire); looby (probably means "booby", as being clumsy or foolish); sea coot; Shoal Island duck (same as Isles of Shoals duck); wamp (from an Indian name, meaning white; the plumage of the male, seen as it sits on the water, is chiefly white).

King Eider. Isles of Shoals duck (see note under the preceding species).

White-winged Scoter. Bay coot; black duck (the plumage of the male is largely black above); brant coot (from its large size among coots); coot; old gray coot (the female is sooty above and grayish below); rock coot (from frequenting ledges); surf duck; white-wing, white-wing coot (the speculum is white).

Surf Scoter. Bald-headed coot (from the white spots on the head of the adult male); black coot, black duck, black sea duck (the plumage of the male is largely black above); box coot (possibly this name has reference to the enlarged basal portion of the bill of the male); butterboat-bill (the swollen bill of the male inverted, might be likened in form to the dish known as butterboat); china-bill coot (the varied color of the bill of the adult male may suggest that of decorated china-ware); coot; gray coot, little gray coot (the female and young, which, however, are brownish rather than grayish); morocco-jaw (part of the bill of the male, being orange to red, may have suggested this name); patch-poll coot (the adult male has two large, triangular, white spots on the head); rock coot (from its frequenting ledges); rotten-bill (the varied color of the beak of the adult male, including white, pink, orange, red, and black, may suggest something decomposing); sea coot; skunk-head (from the black and white coloration of the head of the male); spectacled coot, spectacle duck (round markings on the bill of the adult male suggest spectacles); surf coot; surf duck; white-bill coot (the bill of the adult male is partly white); white-head (there are two large white spots on the head of the adult male).

Black Scoter. Beetle-head (the inflated beak of the male remotely suggesting a beetle or maul); black coot (the general color of the adult male is black); booby duck (a clumsy or foolish one); broad-billed coot; butter-bill (the bill of the male is yellow at base); coot (also in British provincial use); coot duck; hollow-billed coot (the bill of the male is inflated basally); rock coot; surf duck (also in British provincial use); whistling coot (from the sound made by the wings in flight); yellow-billed coot, yellow-nosed coot (the bill of the male is yellow basally).

Ruddy Duck. Booby, booby coot (as being often lethargic or unsuspecting of man); bumble-bee coot (from its small size and the rapid motion of its wings in flight); butterball (from its being often excessively fat); chunk, chunk duck (in allusion to its small size and "blocky" build); coot; dipper (that is, diver); fool duck (see note under booby); looby (equals booby, which see); salt-water teal (teal from its small size); spiketail (the tail feathers are pointed and are often held erect); spoon-billed butterball (the bill is somewhat expanded apically (see note on butterball); stick-tail, stick-tail duck; stiff tail (same note as for spiketail).

(to be continued)

THE SANDY POND — SELKIRK SHORES SECTOR

F. SCHEIDER and E. EVANS

At the eastern end of Lake Ontario, a series of bays and marshes, separated from one another by long tongues of land and from Lake Ontario itself by a strip of barrier dunes, provide a remarkable and diversified complex of excellent birding terrain. The bays are actually the flooded broad, shallow terminations of the creek and river valleys that drain the western Tug Hill Plateau country. Sandy Pond — also known as Big Sandy, North Pond, or just the Pond — is the largest of these embayments and the central one. It possesses the greatest extent of open water and is ringed with a fine collection of cattail and grass marshes. The ponds to the south are South Sandy Pond, the Deer Creek marshes, the Salmon River marshes, Selkirk Shores State Park lagoon, and Sage Creek, north to south in that order; to the north are South and North Colwell Ponds, Goose Pond, the Sandy Creek marshes, and Lakeview Pond, south to north in that order. These northern ponds have a progressively greater percentage of marsh and red maple swamp with increasing distance from the central bay. The most distinct boundaries of the general area are Stony Creek to the north, Route 3 to the east, Route 104B to the south, Sage Creek and Lake Ontario to the west.

The land separating these bays from each other consists predominantly of a loose mixture of sand and glacial rubble. This condition, coupled with the rolling topography of these low ridges, accounts for the primarily agricultural use of the land for dairy farms and hay fields. Proximity to the lake and consequent more even spring and fall temperatures explains the admixture of various orchards and fruit farms here. The lakeshore ends of the gentle dividing ridges are sharply terminated and soil banks 40 to 60 feet high occur, especially on those ridges separating the southern bays. From the lake edge to one-half mile inland, these ridges have numerous woodlots, some of them of considerable extent, e. g., Selkirk Shores State Park woods. The nearness of these woods to the lake combined with the dominate marsh-farm habitat of the area make these small terminal wooded tracts phenomenal bird traps, both spring and fall, though the pattern at each season is quite different.

Resident human population is small, a situation consonant with the mainly agricultural character of the land use here, in view of the large land area and few personnel required for operation of dairy farms and orchards. However, the sand beaches of the barrier strip and the excellent fishing of the marshy bays attract a large summer population which, with increasing leisure and better roads, will almost certainly continue to increase. To date this large summer population has apparently affected only the birds of the dunes and outer beaches (Piping Plover, Common Tern, Bank Swallow), but with the rise of landfill operations for summer camps along Route 3, some of the more shallow marsh areas are already disappearing.

Lake Ontario governs the local weather with a wet and windy force. Characteristically these lakeshore areas are both cooler and drier through

the summer than areas 10 to 15 miles to the south or east. Summer thunderstorms originating on eastern Lake Ontario are usually blown east over the ponds and bays to result in cloudbursts on the western edge of the Tug Hill Plateau but the immediate lakefront may go for weeks without sufficient rain to wash the sand from the leaves of low-growing bushes and plants. Fall is chronically mild to mid-November, but sharp changes in temperature and wind velocity can be expected with any non-west wind. Winter in this area is dramatic with 30 foot high ice barriers and violent winds, rugged with low temperatures but little snow, and practically birdless. At this season open water, aside from Lake Ontario and the Salmon River, is virtually non-existent. Further, in the winter Lake Ontario is covered from one-fourth to one-half mile out from shore with a heaving sea of pack ice, a condition preventing decent duck-watching and duck-counting. Early spring migration suffers from the heavy inheritance of winter ice and frequently species of ducks reported from this sector in spring have been seen weeks earlier at Oneida Lake and other "inland" areas.

The woodlots of the area are mainly mixtures of ash, maple and beech with some hemlocks and yellow birch. Where wetter conditions prevail, red maple and elm predominate. In the Selkirk Shores State Park area, many native white birch and various introduced spruce, pine and fir provide seed and cone crops respectively for winter birds.

Migrations

In spring the south shore of Lake Ontario serves as a great collecting barrier to northbound migrants, particularly small land birds. The majority of these pass eastward along the lakeshore reaching maximal concentrations south of and in the Selkirk Shores State Park area. The lakeshore up to this point (going from west to east and then north) is liberally blessed with many lakeside woods but along the south edge of the Salmon River, the extensive marshes of that river create an abrupt drop in the woodland habitat. Because of this abrupt transition, large numbers of sparrows, thrushes and warblers jam into a narrow strip of wooded and brush-covered barrier dunes separating the Salmon River marshes from Lake Ontario. At times every bush may seem alive with birds. North of the Salmon River, however, the land birds follow the wooded (inland) edge of the Deer Creek marshes, gradually swinging away from the exposed, food-deficient shore area and passing northward along the eastern edges of the remaining northern bays. Because of this migrating small land birds are frankly scarce in spring along the Sandy Pond dunes and those north of it, despite the wooded slopes of those areas, and small-land-birding there typically proves unrewarding.

Quite the reverse situation, however, obtains in the fall, especially when autumn cold fronts advance across the area from north or northwest. Then thousands of warblers, chickadees, vireos, thrushes and sparrows migrating south and south-westward collect in the thin line of woods along the more northern of the barrier dunes and funnel down this sparsely wooded strip in flight after flight. Because of the abundance of migrants here, the scant cover the woods provides, and the treetop elevation the dunes make available, this narrow flight lane is outstanding as a spot where one can easily observe and study the "confusing fall warblers." This same strip in late October

through November may be inundated with winter finches (Redpoll, Pine Siskin, Evening and Pine Grosbeaks) passing south, which usually appear days to weeks in advance of their initial appearance at inland localities.

Migrant waterfowl with the exception of Ring-necked Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, and Bufflehead are notoriously scarce each spring, largely because of ice conditions and high water levels. A noteworthy feature of the spring flight in the past few years is the appearance of small numbers of American Brant from mid-May to early June on the more extensive beaches of the area. This species also occurs in the October-November flight in the same habitat but numbers at that season fluctuate widely from year to year. Fall waterfowl flights more than compensate for the spring paucity for during September, October, and November thousands of ducks, mergansers, geese and loons with lesser numbers of grebes and scoters migrate south just offshore, usually within easy viewing distance of the beach or dunes. Sometimes enormous collections of resting waterfowl gather offshore from the dirt banks or higher dunes between the Sandy Pond inlet and the Salmon River. The best flights come with a strong north, northwest, or west wind. East winds invariably kill any flights and water birding from the beach in such a wind is useless. South winds rarely produce a good flight or decent conditions for observation if one should occur.

A prominent feature of mid- and late May along these bays is the dying off of moon-eyes, which are cast ashore in glistening, smelly windrows, a fishy feast which draws thousands of gulls and terns. The rotting forms of these fish with their attendant insect life attract at that season many shorebirds, notably Ruddy Turnstone, Red-backed Sandpiper, Knot, Sanderling and Black-bellied Plover, all of which occur at the inlets to the bays, mainly at the Sandy Pond inlet. Spring shorebird numbers are usually somewhat better than fall counts but species variety is smaller. In late summer and fall (mid-July to mid-October) the inlet at Sandy Pond regularly attracts uncommon migrants as Hudsonian Curlew, Northern Phalarope, Baird's and Western Sandpipers plus small numbers of practically all the shore-frequenting group. The Selkirk Shores State Park lagoon also serves as a major shorebird attraction: numbers of species and flock counts are usually greater than at Sandy Pond but are quite variable depending on whether or not the lagoon-to-lake channel is open and ultimately on the level of Lake Ontario itself, for with high water few or no shorebirds are present. The fall shorebird flocks may be attended by either Merlins or Peregrine Falcons and the sudden flushing of all the shorebirds may signal the approach of one of these birds.

The fall gull and tern flocks which congregate at the various inlets often attract uncommon species to their ranks and thorough checks of these loitering flocks may turn up Forster's Tern, Brant, or Hudsonian Curlew. Singularly the Bonaparte's Gull is not a conspicuous bird either in frequency or numbers in these flocks. Occasionally a jaeger may appear to harass the omnipresent gulls and terns.

The southern portion of this series of ponds and marshes, in particular the Sage Creek area, has an excellent March through May hawk flight, mainly accipiters and buteos, a concentration produced by the Lake Ontario

water barrier coupled with strong south, southwest, and, infrequently, southeast winds. Further along, like the small land bird flights, this stream of raptors scatters northeastward over Selkirk Shores State Park, expanding into an ever-widening fan of birds, and passes around the eastern side of the sequence of bays. Only a few of the falcons, ospreys and harriers do follow the shoreline closely and small numbers of these may be seen passing north along the outer beach in April and early May. In September and October a light but definite falcon-osprey-harrier flight occurs over the barrier dunes. This latter migration is best observed from the high dunes at Sandy Pond on days with strong north or northwest winds.

Breeding Birds

The abundance of cattail marsh throughout the area supports large populations of bitterns, Florida Gallinules, rails, and resident ducks (Mallard, Black, Blue-winged Teal) but unquestionably the most abundant and conspicuous marsh-nester is the Black Tern, whose colonies occur on all but the two southernmost bays. The wet grassy areas sandwiched between the cattails and the dairy farms provide habitat for Wilson's Snipe, rails, Swamp Sparrows, and, formerly, Short-billed Marsh Wren. The hay fields and dairy agriculture of the area is ideal habitat for all the meadow sparrows (Vesper, Savannah, Grasshopper, Henslow's) along with Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, and Upland Sandpipers.

The breeding birds of the open beach and sand dunes have perhaps undergone the most marked changes. Hyde (1939, Roosevelt Wildlife Bulletin 7:68) in 1935 estimated 12 to 15 pairs of Piping Plover near the Sandy Pond inlet. Today that much picnicked area is occupied by a single pair and no other nesting areas are, at present, known along this strip. Bank Swallows and Belted Kingfishers nesting in the shallow banks of the higher dunes suffer regularly from the depredations of the exploring youngsters of picnicking families. The Common Tern was apparently scarce as a breeder along the Sandy Pond stretch in 1935 and 1936 (Hyde). Numbers had increased strikingly in the late 1940s but with the recent rise of the summer human and gull populations, these same colonies are again on the wane.

As to the breeders of the wooded areas, the Red-eyed Vireo, Redstart, Veery, Ovenbird, Wood Pewee combination numerically prevails. However, the mixture of conifers, especially the native hemlock and the plantation spruce and fir, along with the frequent swampy woods hold a conglomerate of warblers (18 species), Vireos, flycatchers and thrushes. One can find at Selkirk Shores State Park (the area most intensively searched for breeding land birds) Myrtle, Mourning, Pine, and Hooded Warblers, all nesting within hearing distance of each other, so closely are the varying habitats juxtaposed.

The recent advance of southern species has to date only lightly touched this section. Carolina Wrens have been reported at both Selkirk Shores State Park and the Sandy Pond dunes but other southerners such as the Cardinal and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher are unknown. The Golden-winged Warbler, though occurring as far north as Williamstown in the Tug Hill Plateau country, has only very recently become established near Selkirk and is yet to be recorded from the Sandy Pond area.

The many roads through this area give birders access to practically all major beaches, barrier dunes and woodlots. The two best areas unquestionably are the Sandy Pond dunes and inlet and Selkirk Shores State Park. Routes to the latter can be obtained from any road map and fortunately the "shorebird" lagoon is located just to the south and the "warbler" woods just to the north of the main parking lot there. To reach the Sandy Pond barrier dunes, go north from Port Ontario on Route 3 to Sandy Pond Corners. Take the Sandy Island Beach Road west across the marshy southern end of Sandy Pond to the base of the large dunes. Then walk north up the beach one and a quarter miles to the inlet. An inspection of the woods and marshes on the east side of the dunes makes a rewarding return trip from this inlet in late summer and fall.

151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8.

, INC.

The Federation has reached another milestone in its growth and progress. The Committee on By-Laws and Incorporation reports that the Federation's certificate of incorporation has been approved by the Court and was filed with the Secretary of State on August 20, 1956. As of that date we ceased being a nebulous association and became a distinct being in the eyes of the law. Our new by-laws and new name, Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., were approved at the 1956 Convention in anticipation of this change.

In addition to the obvious advantage of being a definite entity, incorporation should be of substantial financial advantage to the Federation. We believe our purposes have always been such as to enable individuals wishing to make a contribution in excess of the regular dues to deduct the amount contributed for income tax purposes. Now that we have clearly spelled out our purposes and powers in our certificate of incorporation and by-laws, this may more readily be done and it is to be expected that more individuals will take advantage of this feature and subscribe to a membership above the regular annual membership.

Sam Madison, 14 McGuffey Lane, Delmar.

NOTES

AN OLD REPORT OF ESKIMO CURLEW ON LONG ISLAND — Like wisps of fog on a misty sea come tales out of the past, some first hand, others repeated, many exaggerated, but occasionally one authentic enough for the record. This narrative is relative to the Eskimo Curlew and seems well founded.

The remarks came from the veteran feather-hunter and well-known guide, the late Nelson Verity, life-long resident of Seaford, Long Island. Mr. Verity died in an accident at his home about five years ago at the age of 92. On many occasions he related to me incidents happening in the latter half of the 19th century both on the Long Island uplands and on the bay. There were no regulated hunting laws during those years and he was busily engaged in feather hunting for the adornment of women's hats. (See Elliott, 1945, Audubon Magazine 47(1):30-34.) He was well-known to sportsmen as a guide and acted in this capacity to William Dutcher, famous Long Island ornithologist of three-quarters of a century ago. (See Elon H. Eaton, 1910, Birds of New York I, 355.)

Nelson's comments spared no one, not even himself, in relation to the relentless attitude of the market and feather hunters of old. In those days any bird that walked, stalked or flew received little mercy from the ever-present shotgun, whose muzzles on busy days were dipped into the bay to cool after excessive shooting. (Despite this the old veteran baymen seemed to hold themselves guiltless and considered it their inalienable right to gun to the limit. I could never convince one that the demand could exhaust the supply. They always retorted with a comment like: "Why there ain't half as many birds on the bay today with all your protection like there were years ago.")

Verity was well acquainted with many shore birds, including the very rare Long-billed Curlew which, however, was reportedly more common years ago in the east. Like other baymen he called the common Hudsonian Curlew "Jack" or "Jack Curlew" and the formerly abundant, but now possibly extinct, Eskimo Curlew "dough-bird" — this name was given it by gunners because of its accumulated fat in autumn.

I talked with Nelson Verity one Sunday afternoon as I sat in his kitchen. Reminiscent thoughts came to him as silence prevailed; then he remarked: "You know the dough-bird, Eskimo Curlew they call it — haven't seen it in many years — gone I guess. They say it's extinct." Upon my concurring on this point, Nelson continued: "I remember the last fair-sized flock I ever saw. It was on a stormy September day. For a couple of days a northeaster had flooded the bay; the meadows (bay islands) were flooded. I was gunning south of here not far from shore and a good-sized floating island of thick, dead thatch was stirring around ahead of me. All of a sudden a close flock of about 40 Eskimo Curlews came by and alighted on the floating thatch island. I shot and got quite a few, bunched as they were. Then instead of flying off they returned and I got some more. They were easy to shoot, always coming back, and do you know: I got every bird of that flock down to the last one." Verity's best recollection of the date was some time in the 1870s.

Much agreement with this comes from Eaton (I, 341) as he fittingly remarks: Many . . . believe that this species is now practically extinct. If so it seems that this unfortunate fate has overtaken it because of its habit of bunching so closely during migrations, that gunners, as well as unfavorable weather conditions, had exceptional opportunities to affect its destruction." He states that it was abundant in Labrador in fall, fattened on crowberry, took the long flight over the ocean to South America and like the Golden Plover was often driven landward by autumn gales. Forbush tells how they were mercilessly shot for food on the Massachusetts coast and also on their spring trip up the Mississippi Valley. Their flesh was described as excellent.

On the other hand the Hudsonian Curlew or "Jack Curlew" avoids hunters, is shy and difficult to stalk, and so perpetuates its race. Only occasionally it, like the Long-billed Curlew, exhibits sympathy for wounded companions, according to Eaton. Furthermore he describes its flesh as quite unpalatable, except when feeding in the fall for some time on berries and grasshoppers.

Strange as it may seem, in Giraud's time, some 115 years ago, the Long-billed Curlew was reportedly more common on Long Island than the Hudsonian. Many of the Long-billed Curlew's nesting grounds have been destroyed by settlement of the west and northwest causing some reduction in numbers. Past records indicate a darkening of the skies by thousands of Eskimo Curlews over Eastern Canada before their flight southward about the time that mass flights of Passenger Pigeons shut out the sun. Both were analogous in close flocking, susceptibility to disregard danger or failure to recognize it and dependence on flock rather than individual security. Each species huddled together, apparently trusting in a close knit mass unit, and because man could readily profit by these conditions, he betrayed their trust. — John J. Elliott, 3994 Park Ave., Seaford, Long Island.

UNUSUAL NESTING SITES OF BANK SWALLOWS — A number of species with wide distribution follow different behavior patterns in localized areas. A brief observation recorded on June 11, 1955, may alert others for such instances in the future. This observation involves the selection of peculiar nesting sites by two small colonies of Bank Swallows.

While driving along the valley route (9N) through Upper Jay, Essex County, in the heart of the Adirondack Mountains, I noted Bank Swallows flying about in close proximity to two separate sawmill operations. I asked Ed Seeber, with whom I was vacationing, to stop the car for further examination of this interesting behavior. When studying the area with binoculars my attention was arrested by small apertures in the sawdust pile. Further study indicated that both piles contained active nesting colonies, estimated at ten pairs each.

Individuals emerged and dived into nesting cavities despite the proximity of the buildings and human activity of all sorts, including all the noise and action one expects of a functioning sawmill. Swallow activity continued regularly even though the metal flume from the saw constantly threw fresh sawdust upon the pile.

Although I've noted Bank Swallows using gravel piles and even honeycombed quarries, this seemed quite unusual. Dr. Harold H. Axtell, Curator of Biology at the Buffalo Museum of Natural Sciences, indicated that he too thought the record unusual. A. C. Bent (1950, U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 179: 404) records two such nesting sites: Barrows observed a fairly large colony at an abandoned logging operation in Michigan, and Slosson studied a smaller colony in New Hampshire. Neither indicates nesting while so much human activity was being carried on. The studies of the Bank Swallow in New York State made by Dayton Stoner (1936, Roosevelt Wild Life Annals, 4(2): 122-233) do not refer to this type of behavior. — Art Schaffner, 170 Laurel Street, Buffalo.

A RECENT SPRING LARK SPARROW — The Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) is a bird of our western plains country with an eastern subspecies (*grammacus*) and a western subspecies (*strigatus*). The eastern bird breeds in eastern Nebraska, north to Manitoba, east to southeastern Ontario, Ohio, western Pennsylvania, and south to Alabama and Louisiana.

New York State records for the bird are mainly from Long Island where it usually appears between July and November. As Griscom points out (1948, Auk 65(3):310) the western subspecies is found in this coastal migrant population. Audubon Field Notes lists several coastal records for the species since 1950, from Maine to Florida.

E. H. Eaton (1914, Birds of New York II, 301) cites a June 13, 1903 record from Oneida Co. and the only nesting record for the State from Monroe Co. where Dobbin found it successfully rearing young in the summer of 1911.

On April 29, 1956 we were looking for ducks and sandpipers along some flooded flats near the Allegheny River three miles west of Allegany (Cattaraugus Co.) and

observed a strange sparrow feeding in an open field. The field had been plowed the previous fall and then flooded earlier this spring; hence only a few hardy weeds were present. Nearby was a brushpile about 15 feet high into which the bird flew to perch a few times. It fed on the ground but occasionally flew to perches three to five feet from the ground. When collected it was perched on a fence wire about three feet from the ground. It was a female Eastern Lark Sparrow (kindly determined by K. C. Parkes of the Carnegie Museum). The bird weighed 24.7 grams, was moderately fat; largest ovum 1.5 mm. in diameter. In its stomach were small adult coelopterids and a few seeds. The wing measured 84.0 mm., tail 64.0 mm. and tarsus 19.0 mm. Dr. Parkes states in a letter that the bird is extremely dark on the dorsum.

The bird was essentially solitary but about 50 yards distant were migrating Vesper, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. In this high plateau country this spring unusually large number of Vesper and White-crowned Sparrows were seen. The Prothonotary (1956, 22(6):43) lists another Lark Sparrow from the Niagara Frontier this spring from Morgans Point, Ontario on May 11 (Drobitts).

Eaton (301) in 1914 stated that he expected this bird gradually to extend its range from northeastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania into New York as the Prairie Horned Lark and Migrant Shrike have done since the clearing of the forest.

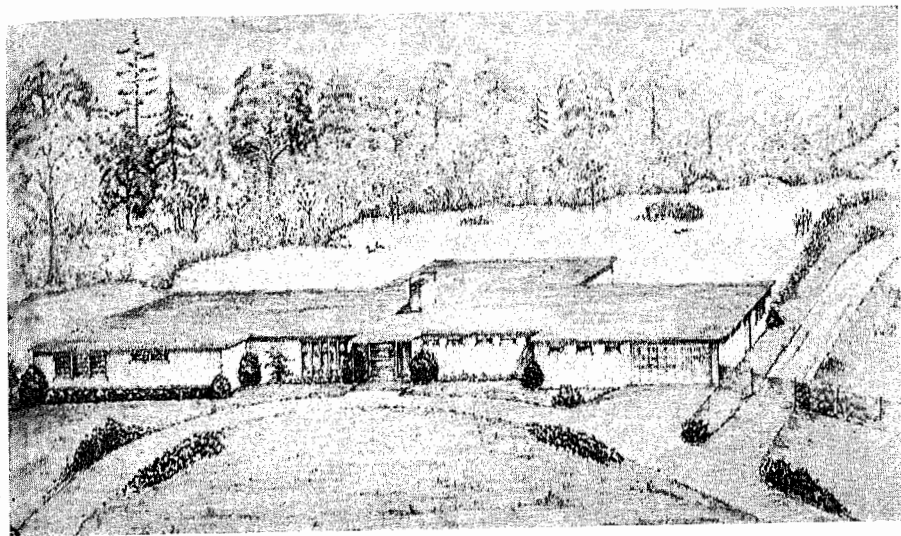
Todd (1940, Birds of Western Pennsylvania, 636) quoting Dickey's description of its habitat in Greene Co., Pa. (SW corner) says, "Hillside pastures and extensive cattle and sheep ranges are its favorite resorts." At the northeastern extremity of its range in Ohio and western Pennsylvania this bird is erratic in numbers and spotty in distribution. Predictions of its spread seem slow in materializing but this recent spring record still keeps alive hope that the Lark Sparrow will invade our few waste and barren fields in western New York. One of the few extensive sheep ranges, where it might be looked for nesting, is on South Hill just east of the south end of Canandaigua Lake. — S. W. Eaton, Biology Dept., St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, and F. G. Meyer, 736 Garden Ave., Olean.

AN UNUSUAL CASE OF MULTIPLE NEST USE. — In the collection of bird eggs owned by the late Ernest G. Tabor of Meridian, New York, one group represents an interesting example of multiple use of the same nest. The group includes three clutches of eggs, laid by three different species, and collected from the same nest within a period of one year and 17 days.

On April 8, 1890, Tabor collected two eggs of the Red-tailed Hawk from a nest on the James Benton farm in the town of Ira, Cayuga county. The following winter, on February 7, 1891, he again visited the nest and removed two eggs of the Great Horned Owl. When he entered the same woodlot on April 25, 1891, he found that the nest had been taken over by a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks, and he removed from the nest three eggs of this species. — Allen H. Benton, N. Y. S. College for Teachers, Albany.

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THE LABORATORY OF ORNITHOLOGY, CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA.

This artist's sketch represents the headquarters building which is fast taking shape on the edge of the Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary. See Allen, 1956, *Kingbird* VI(1) 11-12.

REGIONAL REPORTS

THE BREEDING SEASON: JUNE 1 - AUGUST 15

After the unusual spring migration the summer birding could bring nothing but a let-down. That it should have provided anything at all of interest is no fault of the weather. This year should certainly go on record as the coldest in recent history. The cold and rain seems to have had an effect on ornithology as well as on vacationists. The effect takes three forms: first, in some areas pushing the end of the spring migration back into June; second, retarding nesting or causing early nesting failures; and third, providing luxuriant foliage which may have provided food but which also retarded birding. Attendant on the foliage were unusually large populations of mosquitoes.

The outstanding record of the period without a doubt is the Clay-colored Sparrow discovered in Region 7. As yet unfortunately details have not been supplied for this record. Another interesting, but as yet unsubstantiated record is that of a House Finch in Region 2. There is in addition the possibility that this is an escaped cage bird.

The Snowy Egret made an appearance in Region 5. Evidence possibly related to these upstate occurrences is the report from Region 10 of the Jones Beach heronry which contains over half (80-90 pairs) Snowy Egrets. At this same heronry the Black-crowned Night Herons are out-numbered by Yellow-crowns. We should watch for continuing replacement and the extension of this phenomenon.

Also of interest: a continuing increase in Barn Owl and Upland Plover reports, a Wild Turkey in Region 9. GRR

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

CLARK S. BEARDSLEE

The summer of 1956 was very unusual in that for the most part it was very cool and very wet. This was not so true of June, which actually was rather dry and, except for the first week, normally warm. But July and August were cold enough so that many automatic furnaces started up in both months, and constant rains kept lawns lush and green throughout the period. Migrant warblers tarried into June in considerable numbers due to the very backward season. Mrs. McMurtry reported one of her Sora nest was covered with water after heavy rains, and four of the eggs did not hatch.

LOONS — DUCKS: Nothing of note from these families except that Edna McMurtry has been intensively birding a new 25 acre marsh built in 1953 near Wellsville as a wild life preserve. Pied-billed Grebes, Black Ducks, Mallards, Wood Ducks, Green Herons, American Bitterns, and Least Bitterns have taken advantage of the unusual opportunity afforded by a new marsh habitat. American Egrets were unreported except for one at Oak Orchard Jul 17 (Lippert), and one at the fish hatchery south of Chautauqua Lake (P. Lenna). Undoubtedly the best record of the summer was of an immature Little Blue Heron found on a pond north of Mayville by Claude Parker about Aug 10, and still there at the end of the period.

HAWKS — OWLS: McMurtry noted an Osprey Jun 5 and a Bald Eagle Jul 17 at Wellsville. She found three Sora nests in the new preserve, but no other species of rail. Wilson's Snipe were seen (and probably were breeding) at Java Jun 23 (Schaffner et al.) and at the Tonawanda Indian Reservation at Akron Jul 18 (Coggeshall). Western New York "yields" to other regions for shorebirds records; we have many interesting records each year, but almost exclusively from the Canadian Shore of Lake Erie. Bonaparte's Gulls returned to the Niagara River Jul 21. We were fortunate in receiving two nesting records of the Barn Owl, one of four young taken to the Buffalo Zoo from their nest in a 110 foot high coal hopper in north Buffalo on Jul 25, and the second a nest with seven young successfully reared in Aiden (Wolfing).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: A pair of Blue Jays was occasionally seen in Kenmore throughout the breeding season by Beardslee (no precedent in 29 years). Short-billed Marsh Wrens continue to be extremely scarce. The Brockners reported a very hardy Olive-backed Thrush near their home in Buffalo on Jun 8. Philip Lenna reports what must be the largest starling roost in our area. It is just south of Jamestown, and is estimated to contain well over 100,000 Starlings, augmented by additional thousands each of Red-wings, Grackles, Cowbirds, Robins, Martins (very large numbers), and Barn Swallows.

VIROES — WARBLERS: Coggeshall found a White-eyed Vireo in the Tonawanda Indian Reservation Jul 18. Prothonotary Warblers were reported only from Oak Orchard this year. Migrant species lingered into June, the best such record being of a Bay-breasted Warbler seen Jun 3 at Oak Orchard by Schaffner. The same observer found a Brewster's Warbler at Irving on Jun 2.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Possibly the most notable observation in this group was of a large flock of Red-wings and Grackles, with a few Cowbirds, seen by McKenzie and Lippert at Oak Orchard. They described it as "fifty feet across and took 30 minutes to pass."

132 McKinley Ave., Kenmore

REGION 2 — GENESEE

LEO J. TANGHE

The entire summer was cool and the rainfall except during June was considerably above normal. Migrant warblers remained on the lakeshore through the first week of June. In the latter part of June a good variety of resident warblers was observed in the hilly areas 30 to 40 miles south of Rochester. The most noteworthy record for this period was the first Monroe County record for the House Finch.

LOONS — DUCKS: The only Pied-billed Grebe record for the summer was that of a single bird on a small pond south of Sodus Bay on Jul 6 (Kemnitzers). American Egrets made only one mid-summer appearance in the marshes along Lake Ontario near Braddock Bay. Seven of a larger flock of Brant remained on the west lakeshore until Jun 3. Mallards and Blue-winged Teal were plentiful throughout the summer, but Wood Ducks remained scarce. A female Lesser Scaup, dyed a beautiful pink, was observed at Ling Road on Aug 11 (Tanghe, O'Hara). This bird was approached to within about 30 feet, when it took off in a sustained flight, normal except for a slight list to the right. One Ruddy Duck was seen late in June near Bushnell's Basin (Rose, Hartwell).

HAWKS — OWLS: Among the hawks, only the Red-tailed and the Sparrow Hawk were reported regularly. A Bald Eagle was seen near Gaines on Jun 30 (Lippert) and a Duck Hawk at Braddock Bay on Aug 4 (Listman). Irondequoit Bay and Braddock Bay have provided little in the way of shore-birds. At the latter location, however, 26 Ruddy Turnstones were seen on June 3 (Tanghe). Ling Road marsh, despite the continuing fill-in, remained the best spot for shore birds. In early June a Western Sandpiper was seen there by Listman. Among the returning shore-birds, this small area yielded Solitary, Least, Semi-palmated and Stilt Sandpipers, Lesser Yellow-legs and Dowitchers on Jul 15 (Miller); Wilson's Snipe and Pectoral Sandpiper on Jul 22 (GOS hike); Upland Plover on Aug 4 (OHara); a Wil-

son's Phalarope on Aug 12 (Listman, Simons); and a Black-bellied Plover on Aug 15 (Listman). Other significant shore bird records were a Hudsonian Curlew at Port Bay on Jul 26 (Kemnitzers), Greater Yellowlegs at Gaines on Aug 9 (Lippert), two Knots along the lakeshore near Hilton on Aug 30 (Listman), and eight Sanderlings at Sodus Bay on Aug 12 (McKinney). No Baird's or White-rumped Sandpipers had been reported by Aug 15.

A mid-summer Black-backed Gull was seen on Aug 15 by Listman. Two Caspian Terns were reported at Pultneyville on July 4 by Hartwell. This date is at the normal low point between the spring and late summer migrations. Black and Common Terns were abundant throughout the summer. There were a few summer reports of Black-billed Cuckoos, but none of Yellow-billed. The Screech Owl was reported occasionally, Great Horned once, and others not at all.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: A Red-headed Woodpecker was seen near the Museum on East Avenue, Rochester, on June 9 (Clancy), and a pair nested on the lakeshore at West Braddock. There were a few records of Red-bellied and Pileated. An Olive-sided Flycatcher was observed through a surveyor's transit in Brighton on Aug 13 (Listman). The first breeding record of the Tufted Titmouse was reported from the lakeshore east of Rochester during July by Kemnitzers. There were two adults and four young in the family group. A Mockingbird was seen in Pittsford on Jun 9 by George Jones, Jr. There were two-midsummer records of the Brown Creeper. One bird was seen on the lakeshore east of Rochester by the McNetts on Jul 22, and two at Bergen Swamp by McKinney on Jul 26. There have been a few summer records in previous years of this bird from the latter location. A Hermit Thrush was reported from Wayland on Jun 17 by the Perrys. The only record of Migrant Shrikes was that of a pair seen regularly throughout the summer at Hilton by Dobson. An albinistic Starling was seen at Port Bay by the Kemnitzers on Jul 26. The bird was not pure white, but a very light gray.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: There were several reports of both Blue-winged and Brewster's Warblers. Both birds were observed during June by Mrs. Haller at Avon. Four Blue-winged Warblers were seen in Letchworth Park by Listman on Jun 23, and a Brewster's at the Burroughs Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary by McKinney on Jun 10. A Pine Warbler was seen in Letchworth Park by Listman on Jun 24. Five more records of the Yellow-breasted Chat continued to come in during the summer from well separated areas: LeRoy, Letchworth Park, Mendon Ponds, Fairport and Pittsford. In the Mendon Ponds record of Jun 29 by the Whites and Dakins, two birds were observed, one of which was carrying food. Hooded Warblers were seen regularly by the Kemnitzers during the summer near the lakeshore in Webster.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: The House Finch was reported for the first time in Monroe County by the Kemnitzers and McNetts. This bird, a male, remained at a feeder on the lakeshore just east of Rochester from May 31 to June 2, and was studied at close range under ideal conditions. Two Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen by Listman, Miller and O'Hara on Jun 2 near the lake shore about two miles west of the Genesee River. The birds were seen within 20 feet in good light for ten minutes, and all field marks were clearly noted.

852 Stone Road, Rochester 16.

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY F. HOYT

This has been the coolest, wettest summer in the memory of most residents. Rainfall has been far above normal, and the temperature has reached 90 degrees only a few times all summer. My own thermometer in Etna dipped to the 30s in late June and again in early August. Birds were generally late in nesting. All reports indicated fewer young birds around than usual in late summer. Certain species were almost missing from regular stations, which might indicate a wiping out of small local populations.

LOONS — DUCKS: A young Common Loon was seen Jul 20 near Branchport (C. Spiker), the first summer record there in at least seven years. Great Blue Herons seemed to pick up in numbers at Montezuma Refuge (J. Walker), were scarcer in

Some reporting areas. American Egrets were about in usual numbers at the Refuge, and one was seen at Big Flats July 21 (M. Welles). Four Least Bitterns were seen on a pond west of Keuka Park Aug 12 (F. Guthrie). Redheads, Lesser Scaups and Ruddy Ducks nested at Montezuma (Walker). Two Redheads were seen by F. Gambrell on Seneca Jul 28, and two Goldeneyes by Ward on Aug 15. More unusual was the occurrence of a pair of Goldeneyes on the Chemung River at Elmira from May 19 to Jun 19 (K. Fudge). The female left on Jun 12, the male being seen the extra week after that.

HAWKS — OWLS: Turkey Vultures near Avoca Jul 15 (E. Atwood). Marsh Hawks were rare along Keuka Lake (Guthrie). Other Hawks seemed in usual numbers throughout the region. Sparrow Hawks raised four young in a newly-erected Martin House along Seneca (Mrs. J. Darling). Ring-necked Pheasants were scarce at Geneva, but abundant in the Watkins-Montour area (Bardeen). Rails, both Virginia and Sora, seemed down in numbers. Upland Plovers were reported from new stations. Guthrie found seven adults — at least two pairs had young — in the "Italy Hills" region near Keuka. The first "fall" reports of Caspian Terns were of two on Jul 25 at north end of Seneca Lake (Ward) and one on Jul 28 at the south end of Cayuga (Kellogg). Mourning Doves were abundant everywhere. Barn Owls which are probably often overlooked were reported from new stations. Screech Owls were scarcer than usual, unless they too were less vocal because of cool temperatures.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Chimney Swifts were not so numerous as usual around Geneva and Waterloo (Walker). Pileated Woodpeckers are reported from more stations, while there were fewer reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers again this year around Ithaca. One bird, still showing some juvenile plumage, spent a week in the cemetery at Etna in mid-June. A pair was found nesting on the Welles farm at Elmira, with small young on Aug 6. Kingbirds were unusually common around Keuka (Guthrie).

Purple Martins increased along Keuka Lake, perhaps due to more boxes being put up (Guthrie), also increased along the canal at Waterloo (Walker). A pure white swallow, species unknown, was seen by Orcutt and others at Penn Yan Aug 8, and another one (or possibly the same bird) was reported from Gorham a week later. Blue Jays seemed more common in residential areas this summer everywhere. Usually they retire to the woods or parks, returning to feeders in the fall. House Wrens picked up in numbers at Waterloo (Walker), were spotty, missing from some stations around Ithaca and Etna. At least two pairs of Carolina Wrens nested successfully along west shore of Seneca this year (J. Bardeen).

A Mockingbird was observed in Geneva from Jun 1 to 17 (L. Ward), and Brown Thrashers were commoner than usual around Geneva. Robins, Wood Thrushes and Veeries were abundant at Waterloo (Walker), but at Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary there was a decided drop in the thrush population this summer. Robins in Etna had poor nesting success and few young were to be seen in late summer. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers nested successfully this year in the Keuka College woodlot (Guthrie). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was seen along Newtown Creek Aug 9 by K. Fudge.

WARBLERS — SPARROWS: The Worm-eating Warbler had one young still in nest at Elmira on Jun 23 (O. York). Myrtle Warblers were found at two locations near Caroline, and on Connecticut Hill in June (Hewitt) but no nests located. Redstarts were very spotty around Ithaca. A Yellow-breasted Chat was noted from Jun 7-22 inside Geneva, the first report in some years from the Geneva area (F. Gambrell). Cardinals continue to increase at Geneva. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were locally scarce around Ithaca. Vesper Sparrows were more abundant than usual at Avoca (Atwood). Savannah Sparrows up in numbers at Avoca (M. Carter), Grasshopper Sparrows in good numbers at Avoca and at Keuka, still down in numbers around Ithaca. Henslows Sparrows increasing around Keuka, in good numbers at Ithaca, missing around Geneva. Juncos were seen feeding young on Harris Hill July 28 (A. Fudge).

"Aviana," Etna, New York

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

The whole summer has been quite wet and cool except for the second week of August when it was quite hot but not exceptionally so. Frequent light rains were the rule with few heavy rainfalls so that there was a good deal of moisture in the ground nearly all the time. As a consequence herbaceous undergrowth has been especially thick, providing good cover for birds but making observation, and in some places even access, difficult.

LOONS — DUCKS: A Horned Grebe appeared on the Chenango River in the heart of Binghamton around Jul 1 (O'Neil). It was in breeding plumage, but one wing was almost completely missing. It seemed to feed primarily on insects at the surface and was seen to dive only occasionally. It was last seen Jul 8. An American Egret was at Boland's Marsh near Binghamton Jul 8 (Belmont, Sheffield) and another Jul 28 (Sheffield, Whites). Black-crowned Night Herons were seen regularly around Binghamton during the early part of the season. The highest count was 16 on Jun 20 (Triple Cities Naturalists' Club). Four, one adult and three immatures, were at Sherburne Aug 4 (Whites). Jun 3 at least four broods of Wood Ducks were seen near Deposit totalling 40 ducklings (Wilson). Several broods were noted in the Binghamton area (TCNC) and at Brisben (Whites) at various times. On Jun 3 all but one of about 24 Hooded Merganser eggs hatched in a man made box at Deposit (Wilson). American Mergansers were present all through June along the Beaverkill and the East Branch of the Delaware River (Wilson).

HAWKS — OWLS: Turkey Vultures were seen at Deposit regularly. The highest count was five east of Hancock Jun 21 (Wilson). Mr. Rose reports that at North Kortright, Delaware Co. they have been quite common in other years but this year they have been down in numbers at least during the early part of the period. A pair of Broad-winged Hawks nested near Deposit. Two young were seen in the nest Jun 22 but were gone Jul 4 although apparently not old enough to fly (Wilson). Two Broad-wings were seen in the Endicott area Jul 15 and another Aug 2 (Bemont). There were several reports of Osprey from Norwich, Oxford and Binghamton but no nests were found.

One Wilson's Snipe was at North Norwich Jul 6 and two more at Sherburne Aug 4 (Whites). An Upland Plover was seen near Guilford Jul 11 (Whites). This one was on the same hill but in a different field than those reported last year. Two Solitary Sandpipers and six Greater Yellowlegs were at Boland's Marsh Aug 12 (TCNC). About 50 Ring-billed Gulls were at Oquaga Lake, near Deposit, Aug 14 (Wilson) and a late Bonaparte's Gull was at Norwich Jun 2, 3 and 4 (Stratton). A Common Tern was at Norwich Jun 23 (Whites). Yellow-billed Cuckoos have been quite scarce all summer. They were seen at Oxford fairly regularly (Stratton) but two, one Jun 10 and the other Jun 18, in the Binghamton area (TCNC) and one heard Aug 11 at Deposit (Wilson) were the only other reports received. Black-bills were fairly common at Oxford and Binghamton but were scarce at Deposit.

Near the end of July a family of Barn Owls was discovered atop one of the downtown buildings in Binghamton (O'Neil). The family broke up soon after discovered but one of the young ones was in the area for several more weeks. The late date on which the family broke up might indicate that it was a second family for the year. The building in which the nest was located is in a part of town where there are no residences so that the chances of them going undetected and therefore remaining in the area are quite good. A Barred Owl was at North Norwich Jul 6 (Whites).

GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES: Whip-poor-wills were found near Norwich Jun 6 and 9 in the same place as last year (Whites). Nighthawks were again reported from Binghamton (TCNC) and Hancock (Wilson) but from no place else. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was at South Kortright Jun 6 (Rose) and another near Norwich Jul 6 in the same area as last year (Whites). Another one was near Windsor, east of Binghamton, Jul 5 (TCNC). Bank Swallows again occupied the colony at Boland's Marsh in rather large numbers in spite of the fact that much of their bank had been removed to make way for a future housing development. A

hilly country east and north of the east branch of Fish Creek; Nodecker and Scheider reported decreases or desertions in the colonies near Oneida and along the north shore of Oneida Lake respectively. House Wren: numbers quite reduced from two years ago, a condition noted at Selkirk, Sandy Pond and Rome and commented on by many non-birders in and around Syracuse. Winter Wren: at least a dozen different birds were heard regularly singing into early Aug at Camp Woodland, Constantia; two were present thru late Jun south of Camillus, in a ravine with Louisiana Water-thrushes. Long-billed Marsh Wren: several pairs found in a flooded short grass marsh (eight to ten inches high) near Rome; a nest (dummy nest?) without eggs was located in this situation. Short-billed Marsh Wren: a single singing bird was located, Jun 17, in the Dead Creek marshes southwest of Baldwinsville; no other reports. Wood Thrush: now more common than the Hermit Thrush and almost as common as the Veery at Camp Woodland, Constantia, where five years ago it was the least common of the three. Hermit Thrush: like the Least Flycatcher, song activity greatly reduced, a condition noted both north of Oneida Lake and in the Rome Sand Plains (Paquette, Wayland-Smith) where it is a common bird. Olive-backed Thrush: spring departure date, Jun 5, Syracuse. Bluebird: very scarce, especially around Skaneateles; most observers noted only one or two pairs thru the summer. In the hay-orchard area around Pulaski, however, Mrs. E. Evans thought they had increased somewhat. Loggerhead Shrike: single pairs were reported from Shackleton Point (Wright) and Oneida (Ackley); neither pair appeared to have any young.

VIROES — WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: last spring date is Jun 3, Selkirk Shores State Park. Warbling Vireo: appears to be somewhat reduced in numbers; eg., one pair along the Camillus Valley road where last year there were four. Golden-winged Warbler: more new colonies reported in northwestern Onondaga Co. (M. Bitz). Blue-winged & Brewster's Warblers: singles of each, the latter a vigorously singing bird, were present in Camillus Valley to the last checking (late Jun); what birds appear there next year should be interesting as the Brewster's appeared to be mated to a female Golden-winged. Nashville Warbler: a count of 25 singing males in the Rome Sand Plains, Jun 9, is startling in view of previous summer counts of two and three birds (Paquette, Wayland-Smith, Scheider). Parula Warbler: a singing male was noted, Jun 21-26, at Shackleton Point (Wright); it is unknown as a breeder around Oneida Lake. Myrtle Warbler: singing males reported, Jun 9, Rome Sand Plains, and Jun 10, Highland Forest, southeastern Onondaga Co. No nest has been found in either area but probably only because of lack of intensive breeding season studies. Chestnut-sided Warbler: the dominant Dendroica of the Rome Sand Plains with a count of 60 singing males in a mile and a half of road. With the current return of the brushland north of Constantia to wooded stands, this species is decreasing somewhat there. Pine Warbler: unusual is a single female or immature at Camp Woodland, Constantia, Jul 15, an area where it does not breed. Northern Water-thrush: one on Jul 11, Shackleton Point, may be a post-breeding wanderer or represent a very early migrant. Mourning Warbler: increasing numbers of reports with each passing summer, primarily from areas of maple blowdowns (north of Oneida Lake) and heavy brushy area along abandoned roads and canals (Camillus, Plainville, Otisco Lake). Chat: the one present at Camillus Valley was last seen Jun 10. Canada Warbler: next to the Redstart, Ovenbird, and Yellow Warbler, this was the most commonly reported breeding warbler. Singing ceased quite early, in contrast to the prolonged singing noted in such species as the Winter Wren and the White-throated Sparrow.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Red-winged Blackbird: second and third nestings seemed to have very poor fledgling success, largely due to heavy rainstorms in early Jul. Purple Finch: one, Jun 21, Shackleton Point is unusual as the bird is practically unknown as a summer resident along the south shore of Oneida Lake. Grass-hopper Sparrow: many more accounts of this species, especially noted around Rome and northeast of Baldwinsville; it appeared for the first time in fields that are usually occupied only by Henslow's and/or Savannah Sparrows. Henslow's Sparrow: absent from fields occupied for several years, though no disturbance such as plowing or mowing in such places has occurred. Does this species have that up and down, now present, now absent sort of distribution such as the Short-billed Marsh Wren and Dickcissel have? Junco: reported from the swamp east of Peterboro (Ackleys) in Madison Co., east of the east branch of Fish Creek (Aspinwall), and at Highland Forest, Onon. Co. This situation of a somewhat northern species in two populations, one north, one south of the Oneida Lake flatheads has parallels in the Winter Wren,

White-throated Sparrow, and Myrtle Warbler and a study of the ecology of these species and areas should prove most interesting. Field Sparrow and Indigo Bunting; these were the two dominant finches of the Rome Sand Plains with the Field Sparrows in the oak scrub and the Indigo Buntings in the birch-blackberry thickets. 151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8.

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The temperature for June and July was below normal, but there was enough rain to keep vegetation growing well. There was little activity here among birders, although one calls it a noteworthy summer.

LOONS — DUCKS: An American Egret was seen at Perch River on Aug 15, and Egrets were reported in the southern part of the region. Attempts to get Canada Geese to breed at Perch River Refuge resulted in at least one nest and four young this year. It was another good breeding season for all ducks except Mallards (J. Wilson). Ruddy Ducks were seen at Perch River and Chaumont about the middle of August. A Turkey Vulture was observed for some time by D. Gordon near West Carthage on Jul 14. This is the third record for Jefferson County.

HAWKS — OWLS: A Solitary Sandpiper was seen on July 16 by E. Nichols who reports it as the earliest record for St. Lawrence County. Wilson's Snipe, Lesser Yellowlegs as well as Spotted, Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers were seen at Perch River Jul 21. On Aug 14 two Caspian Terns were seen near Sackets Harbor.

WOODPECKERS — SPARROWS: A Red-headed Woodpecker was noted near Watertown and an adult and an immature bird were observed at Perch River late in August. An Alder Flycatcher was seen and heard on the Tug Hill Plateau west of Houseville Aug 14 (Gordon). Olive-backed Thrushes and Tennessee Warblers were last found in Madrid on Jun 1. The last Bay-breasted Warbler was seen the same day. Nashville Warblers were found in the woods near Madrid this summer by Nichols. This summer Evening Grosbeaks continued to eat at a feeder near Potsdam, and later brought young with them (L. Blake). She also found their nests which I think were in St. Lawrence County. Rev. Nichols also found Evening Grosbeaks this summer. He saw them once at Canton and several times in the Colton region up to Jul 30.

173 Haley St., Watertown.

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

A very quiet summer here bird-wise. Correspondents were active looking for birds; it was the birds themselves which were inactive.

The period from July 1 to August 31 produced only eleven days on which the temperature rose to 90 degrees, the average daily temperature being close to a comfortable 72. Nights were cooler than normal. There were not the exceptional outbreaks of army worms as there were last year. Few caterpillars were only numerous in isolated cases, therefore no cuckoos were reported from any areas.

LOONS — OWLS: Very few Loons were seen on Lake Champlain this summer, and the only inland report comes from Tupper Lake (Kingsbury). Duck Hawks were not noted over the islands of Lake Champlain for the first time in four years. The Turkey Vulture was seen from Four Brothers Island by the gull banding party on 24. This is the second record in two years for this species. An adult Bald Eagle was seen at Little Clear Pond during August (Kingsbury). The Ruffed Grouse

is definitely on the increase this year after their seeming total disappearance last fall. Reported common to plentiful in areas west of the Peru, Keeseville, Essex territory, they were almost completely absent there last year. On Four Brothers Island Ring Billed Gull nesting population is increasing while Herring Gull numbers remain normal. Mr. and Mrs. Bruce McGregor and I banded 780 nestling gulls there. A large flock of Common Terns was noted at AuSable Point Aug 21.

SWIFTS — SPARROWS: Passerine conditions were normal with no outstanding exceptions noted but for one record. Dr. Kingsbury and Miss Amstutz at Sunmount Veterans' Hospital found a **Clay-colored Sparrow**. The bird was observed many times from Jun 15 to Jul 3, with many others seeing the bird. (Ed. Note: Details have been requested on this fine record.) Rusty Blackbirds flocked in large numbers after the nesting season at Tupper Lake (Kingsbury).

Keeseville.

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

JAMES K. MERITT

The summer period in the Schenectady area was generally cool and dry. The period high of 94 degrees was set on Jun 14; the low of 43 degrees was recorded five days later. June rainfall was considerably less than half the average, and that of July was about a half inch below normal. Precipitation continued below normal during the first half of August.

Among the better finds during the summer were a Duck Hawk, a Short-billed Marsh Wren, and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. In addition, some species showed interesting number comparisons in relation to 1955.

LOONS — DUCKS: An unusual summer record was that of a Common Loon seen at Mohawk Lock 7 on Jul 22 (Schenectady Bird Club). During June 1955, up to 90 or so Black-crowned Night Herons could be seen at Vischer's Ponds, but numbers this summer appeared to be down considerably. American Egrets did not put in an appearance locally until Jul 15, when two were seen at Vischer's Ponds (Meritt). A few others were recorded later in the month, and on Aug. 12 a compact group of 28 was seen at the Ponds (Hallenbeck, Meritt). Wood Ducks with young were reported both from Collins Lake, Scotia, and Vischer's Ponds late in July, but breeding waterfowl generally appeared to be scarcer this year than last.

HAWKS — OWLS: A Turkey Vulture was observed over Vischer's Ponds on Jun 17 (Foote). This constitutes the fifth or sixth local record this year; none were reported in 1955. An immature Bald Eagle was seen at Delmar on Jun 3 (Madison), and on Aug 8 a Duck Hawk was observed at the Schenectady County Airport (Bartlett). An Osprey was seen at Stony Creek Reservoir on Aug 5 (Foote). Ruffed Grouse continued to be relatively scarce. There were several reports of the Florida Gallinule. About eight Virginia Rails and four Soras were heard at Meadowdale Marsh on the very early morning of June 24 (Stone). There were several other reports of the Virginia, but no others of the Sora. A Coot was observed at Collins Lake on two occasions during June and again during July (Hallenbeck). On Jul 22 an Upland Sandpiper was seen near Scotia (Brown, Hallenbeck) and this species was also reported from Delmar during July (Sabin). The Solitary Sandpiper and Wilson's Snipe were reported late in the period. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo was first reported locally this year on Jun 2, when one was heard in the Karner pine barrens between Schenectady and Albany (Hallenbeck). The species was reported again in July, but it was decidedly less common than the Black-bill, which was itself not overly conspicuous. A Horned Owl was heard at Alplaus on Jun 21 (Heitkamp). A red-phase Screech Owl was seen almost daily at East Chatham from Jun 4 through Jun 12; a young Screech Owl was also observed on the latter date (Radke). Three to five Barn Owls, the first reported locally this year, were heard in the Meadowdale region during the night of Jun 23-24 (Stone).

GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES: Two Pileated Woodpeckers were observed flying over Vischer's Ponds on Jul 22 (Brown, Hallenbeck, Meritt). One or two Olive-

sided Flycatchers were heard in the Warrensburg area on Jul 14 (SBC). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen at Scotia on Jun 2 (Hallenbeck). Two small Purple Martin colonies were reported in the northern part of Schenectady County, and a larger colony, perhaps a new one in the area, was reported from Round Lake (fide Bartlett). A Brown Creeper was seen at the pond on Jun 24 (Hallenbeck, Meritt) and again on Jul 15 (Meritt). Although this bird is a common summer resident in the northern part of the territory, it is not common in the Mohawk valley. A Carolina Wren was present at Collins Lake, Scotia, but this summer, as last, there was no evidence of the species breeding there. A Winter Wren was heard near Thatcher Park on Jun 24 (Stone). On Aug 5 a Short-billed Marsh Wren was seen and heard at Vischer's Ponds (Foote): this species is a rare summer resident locally. Two completely albino Robins were reported. One was photographed by Mrs. Harry Winne at Rexford in late June, and another was seen at Delmar on Jul 17 (Madison). On Jun 16 a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen and heard at Vischer's Ponds (Meritt): this is the first local report of this species since 1951.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: The Blue-headed Vireo was reported on several occasions from Scotia during June (Hallenbeck). On Jun 3 a Blue-winged Warbler was recorded near Vischer's Ferry (Kaskan); surprisingly enough, this is the only local 1956 report to date. Golden-winged Warblers, however, seemed more common than usual. A Cerulean Warbler was seen at Gallupville on Jun 3 (Zimmer). Another Cerulean and two Worm-eating Warblers were heard near Thatcher Park on June 24 (Stone). Both these species were recorded there the following month by other observers. Following a very good May migration, Blackburnian Warblers appeared more common than usual in the Jenny Lake area, but Myrtles were apparently down in numbers there (Bartlett). The last spring report of the Blackpoll Warbler was from Loudonville on Jun 2 (French). The first "fall" Northern Waterthrush was seen at Vischer's Ponds on the early date of Aug 5. Two Yellow-breasted Chats were recorded in the Meadowdale area in late June (Hallenbeck, Meritt). This was the only period report for this species.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Bobolinks appeared more generally distributed this summer than last. A male Cardinal was present throughout the period in Niskayuna (Eddy), but I know of no evidence of the species breeding. A single male Evening Grosbeak was present at Gallupville as late as Jun 2 (Zimmer). On Jun 17 three pairs were observed at Jenny Lake (Bartlett). This species breeds not uncommonly in the Sacandaga Reservoir area. Henslow's Sparrows were quite widely reported, much more so than last year. In contrast, there were only two or three reports of the normally relatively common Grasshopper Sparrow.

Two May reports of the hybrid Brewster's Warbler were received too late for inclusion in the spring summary and so are noted here. On May 13 Rudd Stone and others observed one at Ravena, south of Albany. Another was seen on May 20 at East Chatham by Eleanor Radke. Corrections to the spring summary: The Blackburnian Warbler was first seen on May 1 (not on May 5, as reported). A Yellow-breasted Chat was seen in Albany during May by Allen Benton. This raises the spring count of warblers recorded from thirty-three to thirty-four (exclusive of the hybrid Brewster's).

16 Ellen Lane, Scotia 2.

REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

With the last days of May, the eventful spring migration faded away rapidly, leaving in its wake the unfolding of what turned out to be a quite normal, unexciting nesting season. In general the weather continued on the cool side throughout most of the summer and the precipitation was sufficient to prevent any great surface drought. For humans it was a controversial season — depending upon your body metabolism, but for the birds there was probably little effect from the weather other than normal. Judging from the reports, it would seem evident that this nesting season was off. How much so cannot be determined from the information at hand. Per-

haps this comes as an anticlimax, leaving us wanting for excitement that we cannot, however, really expect. It was noted by some observers that lateness in the emergence of many insect species continued on into the summer.

LOONS — DUCKS: The Snow Egret, rarer in this region than the American Egret, was reported near Cornwall on the Hudson, Jul 29 and Aug 8 by Ed Treacy. The Yellow-crowned Night Heron, also rare in this region, was found on Jul 21 at the New Lake De Forest reservoir in Rockland (Frank & Ruth Steffens) and again on the next day by Robert Deed who reports the record as being the second for Rockland County.

HAWKS — OWLS: Hawk status seemed usual for the season. Wilber Carr reports seeing five Bald Eagles about the Cliff Lake area in Sullivan County during August. Also in Sullivan, a Wild Turkey was seen near Bethel on Jul 20 (McBride). Mrs. George Little of Carmel, Putnam, comments that the lowering of some of the reservoirs in her area by the N. Y. C. Water Department, exposing mud flats, has attracted a fair number of shorebirds. During the summer she has seen such species as: Killdeer, Semipalmated Plover, Least Sandpiper and Semipalmated Sandpiper. Again Ed Treacy reports the locally rare Caspian Tern. Near the Hudson at Cornwall on July 22 he watched three at leisure.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: The Least Flycatcher was down in numbers in some areas of Ulster (Hough). The House Wren is still below normal in Rockland (Deed). On Slide Mountain, in Ulster, on Aug 4 and 5 Ilse Dunbar, Fred Hough and Dan Smiley were surprised to find the Olive-backed and Bicknell's Thrushes completely silent. They seemed to have done a disappearing act as they were not encountered at any time. More diligent search may have been needed to locate them.

VIRES — WARBLERS: The nest of the Canada Warbler was found near Katonah, in Westchester, on Jul 8 (Russell). On the above mentioned Slide Mountain trip at least three lower zone species of Warblers were noted wandering about the summit or balsam zone. Black-throated Green and Canada Warblers and Redstarts were seen. The Redstarts, mostly females and immatures, were the most common. The usual nesting warblers seemed to be normal on Slide.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: For the past four years the Orchard Oriole has successfully nested at Stone Ridge, in Ulster. They arrived this season on time but were late in starting their nesting operations. This lateness may well have been due to the retarded foliage of May. The nest was finally constructed in the very top of the white swamp oak used the year before. Instead of coming off in latter June it was not until Jul 10 that the young left the nest (Hough). In New City, Rockland, a Purple Finch summered about the home of Frank and Ruth Steffens. A pair of this species was also observed frequently during June and most of July at Stone Ridge, in Ulster, but no evidence of nesting was found (Hough).

Note: Wilber Carr reports that spraying for the Gypsy Moth in the Lebanon Lake and Mongaup Falls area (Sullivan County) seems to have affected the bird population seriously in those areas. Dead Phoebes and warblers were found and wrens which previously had been thick have disappeared entirely.

Accord 1.

REGION 10 — MARINE

JOHN J. ELLIOTT

A fairly comfortable summer followed a cold spring, with sufficient rainfall to prevent drought and to nourish a heavy growth of weeds and grasses on abandoned farms and in waste places. By midsummer heavy seed crops were in evidence also in marshes and on sand-dunes along the ocean. Vegetation on the latter came through natural process and by planting after its almost complete obliteration by the hurricanes of the past two years. At the time of this writing (Sep 10) there have been no hurricane threats and consequently no reports of storm-driven waifs to our coast.

Phenomenal numbers of ducks occupied the Jamaica Bay Sanctuary in June which later produced nesting Blue-winged Teal and Shoveller — the latter a new breeding species for Long Island. The Jones Beach heron colony showed a tremendous increase this year. In a report sent by John Bull of Far Rockaway, a party of six or more observers on Jul 15 found an estimated 800 herons and egrets of five species on the Sanctuary grounds. There appeared to be a good crop of immature Common Terns and Skimmers on western Long Island. Among land-birds young Oven-birds, as well as other woodland dwellers, seemed quite independent of parental care in early July.

LOONS — DUCKS: There were very few late loons recorded and only one or two nesting Pied-billed Grebes. Wilson's Petrels were reported on several occasions from shore, with 200 counted at Westhampton Beach, Jun 10 (E. Daly, R. Grant). Gannets were still passing through in early Jun; no large flocks of Double-crested Cormorants in Moriches Bay to end of period.

Some 30 adult American Egrets, two immatures able to fly, and four downy young in the nest, were found Jul 15 at Jones Beach. Also present were an estimated 80-90 pairs of Snowy Egrets with 100 young, 40 pairs of Yellow-crowned Night Herons with 80 young and 30 pairs of Black-crowned Night Herons (J. Bull, I. Alperin, P. Buckley, et. al.) This constitutes the first breeding area of American Egrets for western Long Island and the second breeding record, a previous but unpublished one having come to me last year of two three-quarters grown young found in a nest Jul 9, 1955, in the same area (W. Larrabee).

A Jun 9-10 count of ducks at the Jamaica Bay Sanctuary included two Bald-pates, two Green-winged Teal, two Canvas-backs, about two dozen Scaup, seven pairs of Ruddy Ducks and two Red-breasted Mergansers (P. Buckley). Some were probably injured or crippled from the previous hunting season. Gadwall nested at Jones Beach Sanctuary pond again this summer, and a mother duck feigned injury to draw attention away from several young about ten days old as late as Sep 19 (J. Elliott, G. Rising). Three Wood Ducks were summering at Northport (E. Mudge).

HAWKS — OWLS: There were fewer reports of Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks on western Long Island. An adult Red-shouldered was noted at Mt. Sinai, May 19 with downy young in the nest (G. Raynor) and two Broad-winged Hawks were seen daily in July at Northport (E. Mudge). The Osprey in recent years has almost completely failed as a ground-nester on Gardiner's Island because of the increase of nesting Herring Gulls (R. Wilcox). Practically no south-bound falcons were recorded to the end of the period Aug 15.

One or two records came in of Ruffed Grouse; Bob-white was heard in many locations from Massapequa eastward. Few rail records, except for Clapper which was reported in good numbers, with eight to ten calling at Mt. Sinai (near Part Jefferson) May 30 (G. Raynor); nesting Florida Gallinule this summer at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary (E. Whelen). Fair numbers of shore birds came through in late July-early August. Roy Wilcox was back banding Piping Plovers on the Westhampton Beach sand-dunes in mid-May. Upland Plover was again on its nesting grounds at Westbury; a Hudsonian Curlew appeared at Jones Beach Jun 6; several reports since. Shore-birds became fairly numerous in late July and early August, but few interesting records or rarities were reported.

An estimated 600-700 Common Terns and about 100 Black Skimmers nested on an island near Moriches Inlet. Herring and Black-backed Gulls have increased tremendously in the last few years. Roseate Terns were reported this summer from five to six locations. A good flight of jaegers came through around Jun 10 both at Jones Beach and at Westhampton Beach. At Westhampton 20, mostly Parasitic, were chasing Common Terns (R. Grant). Great Horned Owl bred at Bronx Park with three young in the nest present to May 13 (P. Buckley).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: There were no breeding records of Nighthawk turned in for the region. Least Flycatcher nested along the North Shore in the Manhasset-Oyster Bay area and June birds were reported at Manorville. Purple Martins were

plentiful at Seaford, and a colony was also noted at Riverhead (Queens County Bird Club). Four or five Carolina Wrens were reported at Wading River (Raynor) and one at Massapequa, Jun 16 (Mayer, Rose). A Mockingbird's nest, believed to be the first authentic record for Long Island for many years, was found at Roxbury on Rockaway Beach. On Jul 15 both adults were seen with the four young which were then able to fly well (numerous observers).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: Yellow-throated and Warbling Vireos were singing on nesting grounds in the Oyster Bay region; Parula Warbler was noted again at the Cutting Arboretum, Great River, into June, but, as with the two former years, no positive evidence of nesting was found. The Black-throated Green was back in its favorite haunts in the West Hills for about the 15th consecutive year; Pine Warblers were found at Commack; Louisiana Water-Thrush at Mill Neck and Cold Spring Harbor and Chat at Commack.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Bobolink was found at Babylon; no Orchard Orioles recorded Scarlet Tanagers were plentiful; Cardinal present into eastern Suffolk county (Wilcox); Grasshopper Sparrow numerous on Montauk downs and bred intermittently to Westbury. Henslow's Sparrow searched for without success in the Nepeague lowlands (Elliott). This species has become exceptionally rare, as has its associate the Short-billed Marsh Wren, as nesting Long Island birds. There was a good showing of Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows in the Moriches marshes — species that have been eliminated in many western Long Island areas due to fill. Vesper Sparrows were found in June at Commack (Mayer, Rose). The species was unsuccessfully sought after around extensive farms and grasslands around Syosset and the bird is becoming increasingly scarce in Nassau county.

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