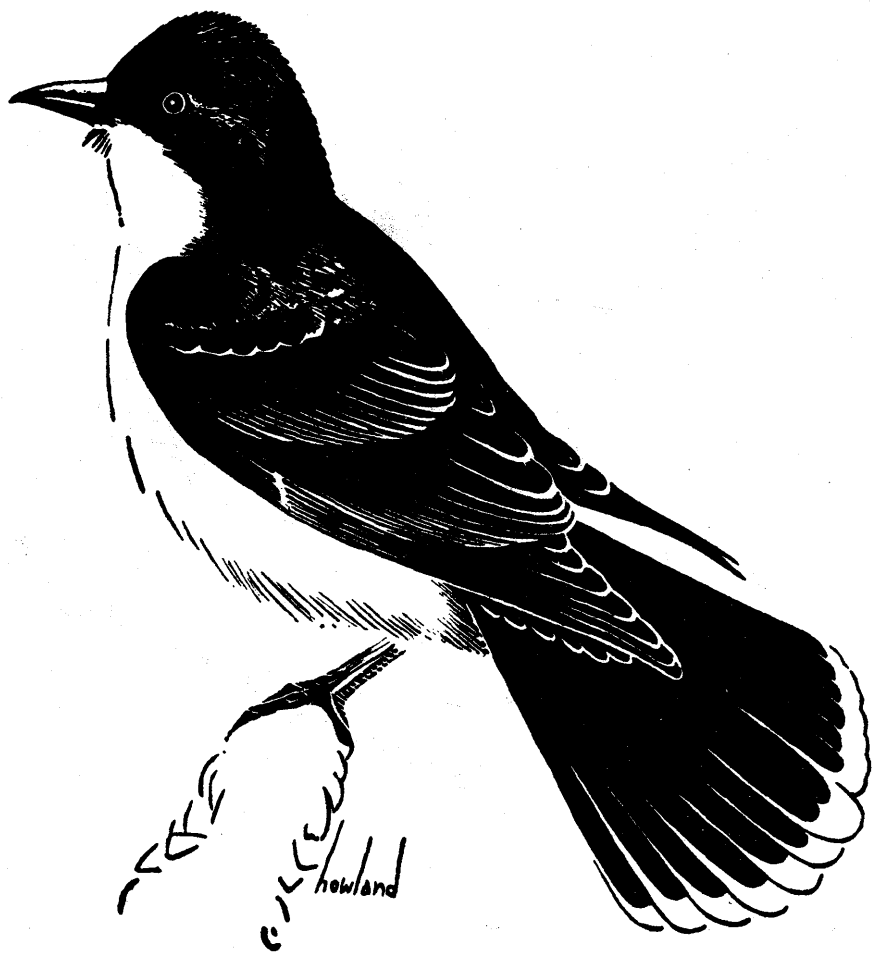


# The KINGBIRD



VOL. XXVIII, NO. 4

FALL • 1978

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

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# The KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

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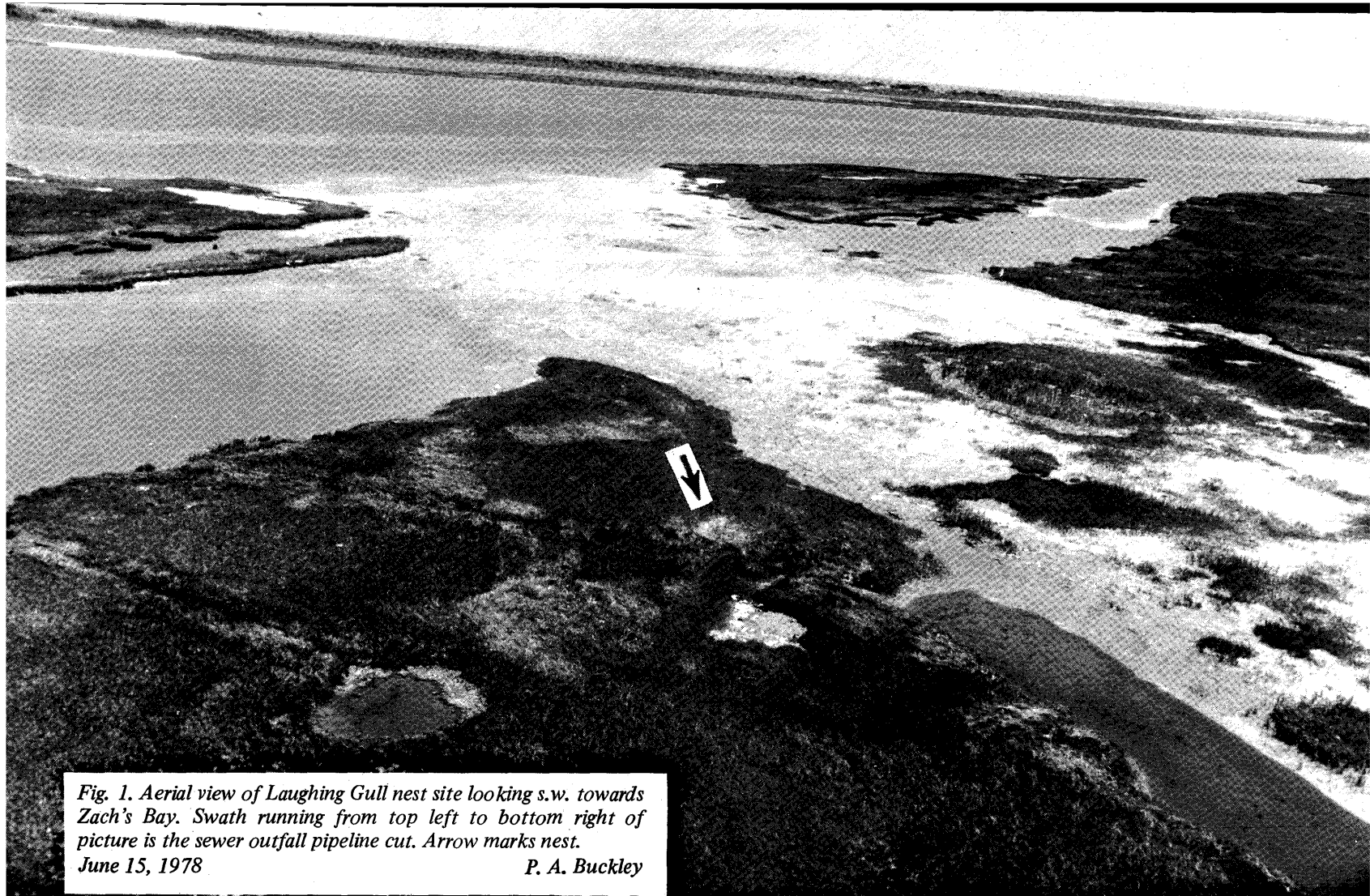
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*Co-Editors* — Emanuel Levine and John Farrand, Jr.

*Highlights of the Summer Season*  
*Guest Editor* — Vivian Mills Pitzrick

*Circulation Manager* — Frederick C. Dittrich

*Cover Design* — Douglas L. Howland



*Fig. 1. Aerial view of Laughing Gull nest site looking s.w. towards Zach's Bay. Swath running from top left to bottom right of picture is the sewer outfall pipeline cut. Arrow marks nest.*

*June 15, 1978*

*P. A. Buckley*

## BREEDING LAUGHING GULLS RETURN TO LONG ISLAND

FRANCINE G. BUCKLEY, MICHAEL GOCHFELD and P. A. BUCKLEY

After an absence of almost 80 years, Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*) have been found nesting again on Long Island. Formerly a common breeding summer resident (Giraud 1844; Griscom 1923), the Laughing Gull was extirpated as a regularly breeding species in the late 1800s, when depredations by the millinery trade and commercial eggers drastically reduced the numbers of virtually all colonial waterbirds along the entire Atlantic coast. Presently breeding in scattered colonies from Nova Scotia southward to Massachusetts, and in larger numbers from New Jersey to the Caribbean and off both coasts of Mexico, the species did not recolonize New York as it did New Jersey in numbers during the 1930s (Buckley 1977), although it retained its New England foothold (Nisbet 1971).

Few breeding records exist for New York after 1888 when Dutcher recorded them as still nesting on Long Island (Griscom 1923). Although Bull (1964) cites a three-egg clutch in the American Museum of Natural History taken in June 1890 on Cedar Island, in Great South Bay north of Jones Beach, as the last Long Island nesting, Latham belatedly (1975) reported two pairs still nesting in May 1900 "on a gravelly section of the beach [at present-day Orient Pt. State Park] between two strips of salt marshes," and Braislin (1907) mentions a "recent" suspected nesting at Amityville, also in Great South Bay, on June 15 but did not give a year.

Laughing Gulls began returning to Long Island and environs as spring, summer and fall transients sometime in the 1910s, and after a major autumn influx in 1921 and 1922, Griscom (1923) confidently expected it to return as a nester to Great South Bay in the 1920s. It did not, but by 1942, Cruickshank recorded it "common" in spring and summer and "abundant" in fall, with "large colonies" in New Jersey. This generally upward trend continued, and recently (1973-1978) there seems to have been a sharp increase in the number of summering adult and almost-adult plumaged individuals, especially on the north shore of Long Island. During a 1977 helicopter census of nesting colonial waterbirds on Long Island (Buckley and Buckley, in prep.), we found two to four Laughing Gulls in breeding plumage frequenting one area of the Line Island complex of salt marsh islands in Great South Bay, north of Jones Beach and south of Wantagh, in eastern Nassau Co., but were unable to locate any nests.

Other observers also commented on the large numbers of summering "adult" Laughing Gulls on the south shore of Long Island in 1977 (Buckley, Paxton and Cutler 1977).



Fig. 2. Adult Laughing Gull leaving nest as helicopter is drifted slowly towards it. P. A. Buckley  
June 15, 1978

In 1978, while again censusing Long Island's colonial waterbirds, we paid particular attention to the Line Island complex, where in 1975 we had found New York State's first nesting Gull-billed Terns (Buckley, Buckley and Gochfeld 1975). Early in the morning on June 15, we saw two breeding-plumaged Laughing Gulls flying among the nesting Common and Gull-billed Terns. While we could not find any nest at that time, later in the day we returned to the site to find one gull repeatedly returning to a particular area of dead *Spartina alterniflora* stems on the salt marsh adjacent to the pipeline cut and overburden created when the Wantagh sewage treatment plant was connected to its ocean outfall. After we circled at some distance, the gull finally settled on what appeared to be a nest. We landed immedi-



June 15, 1978 *Fig. 3. Close-up of Laughing Gull nest and egg.* P. A. Buckley  
ately, and found Long Island's first Laughing Gull nest in probably 78 years (see Figs. 1-3). It contained a single warm egg, 60.2 x 35.2 mm. The gull nest was within 100m of the 1975 and 1978 Gull-billed Tern nests. As we departed we noticed a third adult gull in the same area, but no sign of another nest. Later that same day, two more breeding-plumaged Laughing Gulls were seen in a Common Tern colony in Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge seated on *Spartina patens* flats adjacent to J.F.K. International Airport, but we were unable to locate a nest at that time. We were unable to return to the Line Islands nest after June 15, and so we have no information on the ultimate clutch size or fledging success. A visit by A. J. Lauro in late July found a pair of adults behaving as if young were nearby, but none was located.

Why Laughing Gulls were unable to recolonize Long Island sooner than 1978, despite extensive salt marshes that appear suitable, populations that were increasing dramatically in the early and mid-1900s in the mid-Atlantic states, and the continued presence through the period of colonies north of Long Island, is somewhat puzzling (Buckley 1977; Howe, Clapp and Weske, in press; Nisbet 1971, 1976).

Whatever the answer, it would seem to apply equally well to coastal Connecticut and Rhode Island, still without nesting Laughing Gulls.

While there is little doubt their extirpation towards the end of the 19th century was due to depredations of the millinery trade combined with unregulated eggging and hunting, the continued "Long Island gap" has eluded explanation. One possibility is the extensive ditching of Long Island salt marshes (Buckley 1977; Howe, Clapp and Weske, in press), a notion supported by the nature of the present site at the edge of a natural-appearing marsh which is growing on a spoil overburden and thus is devoid of ditch contours. Refuting this explanation are the extensively ditched salt marshes in southern New Jersey, harboring, in 1977, more than 35,000 pairs of Laughing Gulls (Buckley 1977), and the fact that generally speaking, ditching did not peak on Long Island until the 1930s, while it was already extensive in southern New Jersey by the late 1890s. Destruction of habitat by marsh filling is also not a likely explanation on Long Island, where some 21,400 acres still existed in Nassau and Suffolk Counties as of 1972 and it is likely that this acreage has decreased by only 5-6% subsequent to 1972. More recent Laughing Gull decreases in New England (Nisbet 1971, 1976) and in New Jersey (Buckley 1977; Burger 1977) have been attributed to egg and chick predation by Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, as well as the larger gulls' earlier annual arrival and occupation of higher, less flood-susceptible nest sites (Berger pers. com.). However, Herring Gulls did not begin nesting on Long Island until 1931 (Bull 1964), although Cruickshank (1942) estimated over 1,000 nesting pairs when writing his book.

Recent Laughing Gull population trends on the coast from Maine to Virginia are downward (Erwin 1978). If the species is able to colonize Long Island successfully, the almost exclusive breeding of Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls on high, dredge spoil or natural islands (Buckley and Buckley, in prep) may offer Laughing Gulls competition-free marshes where their breeding numbers might recover unimpeded. Their fate on Long Island over the next 10 to 20 years should be monitored closely.

Support for helicopter censusing of Long Island's colonial waterbirds came from the North Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service, and is gratefully acknowledged.

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- Francine G. Buckley, P. A. Buckley—North Atlantic Regional Office, National Park Service, 15 State Street, Boston, Mass. 02109*
- Michael Gochfeld—Division of Environmental Health, School of Public Health, Columbia University, 600 W. 168th Street, New York, New York 10032*

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES:  
29. WESTERN GREBE

CHARLCIE DELEHANTY



*Western Grebe—Tupper Lake, St. Lawrence Co.*  
*August 5, 1978* *Tom Davis*

The Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) is a bird of western North America, breeding east to southern Manitoba and southwestern Minnesota (J. Bull, 1974. *Birds of New York State*. Doubleday/Natural History Press, Garden City, N.Y.). The species winters mainly on the Pacific Coast, and is considered accidental in eastern North America. Bull (*loc. cit.*) lists the bird as “hypothetical” in New York, with “at least a dozen sight reports, most of them up-state . . . dates of ‘occurrence’ range from Oct. 25 to May 21.” Elsewhere in the East the species’ occurrence is well documented in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Virginia, South Carolina, and Florida.

On July 2, 1978, a Western Grebe was discovered by the author and her husband near Buoy "I" at Black Point, Tupper Lake, St. Lawrence County. Tupper Lake, (elevation 1554') lies near the center of the Adirondack Mountains. The lake is about five miles in length with an irregular rocky shoreline and several islands of varying sizes. The water in this lake is notably crystal clear.

This Western Grebe remained on Tupper Lake until at least October 7th. During this time it was observed by dozens of persons and recognizable photographs were obtained by Thomas H. Davis, Paul A. DeBenedictis, John D. Delehanty, Dr. Marguerite Kingsbury, and others. During its stay the grebe moved about the southern end of Tupper Lake, also occurring at Buoy "J" near Green Island and near two small marker buoys in Bridge Brook Bay. The bird's preference for buoys was notable, perhaps utilizing these permanent floats in its feeding strategy, and taking cover behind them when boats passed close by. When approached closely the grebe reluctantly, it seemed, edged away from the buoy, or dove, resurfacing 100 feet or more away. It immediately returned to the side of the buoy once the threat had passed. On October 7th, the bird was heard for the first time emitting a sharp, shrill whistle. The black and white photograph accompanying this article does not do justice to the bird's striking red eye, or yellow bill.

I would like to thank Marguerite Kingsbury and Thomas H. Davis for assistance received in the preparation of this paper.

*P.O. Box 758, Tupper Lake, New York 12986*

## NEW YORK STATE WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 1978

WALTON B. SABIN

This year's Federation Waterfowl Count period, from January 7 to January 15, 1978, was not as cold as 1977. However, most of the usual smaller lakes and other bodies of water were frozen over. During the count period the larger lakes and rivers and Long Island did not experience the heavy freeze-up of a year ago. As so often happens in mid-winter, a week or so can make all the difference in getting a good count or not. The total count this year was down to 129,907, a 38.9% decrease from 1977.

The Department of Environmental Conservation mid-winter aerial waterfowl survey was from January 3 to January 19, 1978, and yielded a total of 139,238 birds, 31.2% lower than 1977, and 28.4% below the long term average.

In looking at the two counts it is apparent that they show comparable decreases overall. Some reasons for the lower counts are the sharp decreases in Black Ducks, Redheads, Canvasbacks, scaups and scoters on the ground count and Brant, Black Ducks, Redheads, Canvasbacks, Common Goldeneyes, Oldsquaws, scoters and mergansers on the aerial count. On the other hand there were some pluses such as notable increases in Canada Geese, American Wigeons, Common Goldeneyes and Oldsquaws on the ground count and Canada Geese and Buffleheads on the aerial count.

The only places where there are opposing trends are with Common Goldeneyes and Oldsquaws. The major differences in numbers of these two species occurred in western New York waters, chiefly in Region 1. More than likely this was due to the fact that the aerial count was made approximately ten days later than the ground count.

The very large decrease in scaup numbers on the ground count took place in Region 10 in the area around and in New York City's five boroughs. This is an area that is not covered on the aerial survey because of aerial traffic problems. At this writing there is no indication that the missing birds were located elsewhere along the Atlantic coast.

In checking federal figures for the Atlantic Flyway, total waterfowl numbers declined almost 19 percent from last year but were only six percent below the average for the last 10 years.

A direct listing of the most abundant species, by ground count and aerial survey, and comparing 1977 with 1978, is given below.

	<u>UPSTATE</u>				<u>LONG ISLAND</u>				<u>TOTALS</u>			
	<u>Aerial</u>		<u>Ground</u>		<u>Aerial</u>		<u>Ground</u>		<u>Aerial</u>		<u>Ground</u>	
	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Canada Goose	4,370	8,911	7,662	5,458	4,092	5,587	4,443	8,482	8,462	14,498	12,105	13,940
Brant	0	0	1	0	13,622	8,936	3,438	3,218	13,622	8,936	3,439	3,218
Mallard	4,782	2,173	10,551	11,183	2,321	2,433	7,274	5,704	7,103	4,606	17,825	16,887
Black Duck	7,052	4,178	2,765	2,410	18,506	14,637	15,285	8,680	25,558	18,815	18,050	11,090
Am. Wigeon	215	0	78	22	24	116	1,193	1,970	239	116	1,271	1,992
Redhead	8,710	1,830	8,205	5,788	15	0	154	89	8,725	1,830	8,359	5,877
Canvasback	6,929	2,890	5,153	2,919	1,498	1,920	5,399	3,615	8,427	4,810	10,552	6,534
Scaup (both)	6,067	10,981	1,681	6,329	29,745	25,730	82,427	25,316	35,812	36,711	86,611	31,635
Com. Goldeneye	5,671	6,730	9,019	11,284	4,271	1,459	1,949	1,040	9,942	8,189	10,967	12,324
Bufflehead	60	64	760	1,033	931	2,025	2,457	2,156	991	2,089	3,217	3,189
Oldsquaw	98	1,119	751	3,469	3,180	493	1,214	532	3,278	1,612	1,965	4,001
Scoters (all 3)	1	146	67	27	32,891	1,440	20,080	3,951	32,892	1,586	20,147	3,878
Mergansers (all 3)	41,026	30,742	10,173	7,609	4,739	3,774	1,334	3,448	45,765	34,516	11,507	11,057
Am. Coot	355	249	1,692	1,194	15	46	393	141	370	295	2,085	1,335
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>85,336</b>	<b>70,013</b>	<b>58,558</b>	<b>58,725</b>	<b>115,850</b>	<b>68,596</b>	<b>147,040</b>	<b>68,342</b>	<b>201,186</b>	<b>138,609</b>	<b>205,598</b>	<b>127,067</b>

GROUND SURVEY BY REGIONS – JANUARY 1978

	1	2	3	4
Common Loon	1	1	4	
Red-throated Loon				
Red-necked Grebe				
Horned Grebe	5	5	35	
Pied-billed Grebe			14	
Great Cormorant				
Double-crested Cormorant				
Mute Swan				
Whistling Swan				
Canada Goose	54	3	4,595	
Brant				
Snow Goose				
Mallard	2,596	2,652	3,082	328
Black Duck	217	117	1,124	85
Mallard x Black Duck			4	
Gadwall	7	2	68	
Pintail	3	1		
Green-winged Teal				
American Wigeon	22			
Northern Shoveler				
Wood Duck		1	3	
Redhead	44	20	5,599	3
Ring-necked Duck	2		58	
Canvasback	2,271	14	566	
Scaup (both species)	1,978	1,054	1,694	
Common Goldeneye	6,656	1,598	567	27
Barrow's Goldeneye	1			
Bufflehead	509	60	290	
Oldsquaw	3,265	64	2	
Harlequin Duck	1	1		
Common Eider				
King Eider				
White-winged Scoter	24			
Surf Scoter				
Black Scoter				
Scoter (sp?)				
Ruddy Duck			2	
Hooded Merganser	2	2	6	
Common Merganser	6,045	349	32	19
Red-breasted Merganser	56	52	6	1
Duck (sp?)				
American Coot	4	4	1,181	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>23,763</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>18,932</b>	<b>463</b>

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS

5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
1				1	63	71
					4	4
					1	1
2				5	91	143
1					23	38
					28	28
					4	4
				84	328	412
					6	6
156		350	3	297	8,482	13,940
					3,218	3,218
				3	1	4
1,069	18		489	949	5,704	16,887
161	76	31	268	331	8,680	11,090
5						9
7	1				303	388
				1	251	256
			2		148	150
					1,970	1,992
					172	172
			3	2		9
118	2		2		89	5,877
1				221	7	289
		49		19	3,615	6,534
1,599				4	25,306	31,635
1,063	378	973	4	18	1,040	12,324
		1			1	3
20	1	150		3	2,156	3,189
138					532	4,001
					1	3
					372	372
3					14	17
					2,315	2,339
3					540	543
					756	756
					240	240
					34	36
2					29	41
280	252	96	82	280	13	7,448
47					3,406	3,568
				10	525	535
2				3	141	1,335
<u>4,678</u>	<u>728</u>	<u>1,650</u>	<u>853</u>	<u>2,231</u>	<u>70,609</u>	<u>129,907</u>

AERIAL SURVEY – JANUARY 1978  
Department of Environmental Conservation

	<u>Upstate</u>	<u>Long Island</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Mute Swan	0	554	554
Canada Goose	8,911	5,587	14,498
Brant	0	8,936	8,936
Mallard	2,173	2,433	4,606
Black Duck	4,178	14,637	18,815
American Wigeon	0	116	116
Redhead	1,830	0	1,830
Canvasback	2,890	1,920	4,810
Scaup (both species)	10,981	25,730	36,711
Common Goldeneye	6,730	1,459	8,189
Bufflehead	64	2,025	2,089
Oldsquaw	1,119	493	1,612
Scoters (all three)	146	1,440	1,586
Ruddy Duck	0	10	10
Eiders (both species)	0	65	65
Mergansers (all three)	30,742	3,774	34,516
American Coot	249	46	295
<b>Totals</b>	<b>70,013</b>	<b>69,225</b>	<b>139,238</b>

I would like to thank all who participated, especially the regional coordinators who are:

- |                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Region 1—Dr. Alan H. Reckhow | Region 6—Lee B. Chamberlaine |
| 2—Walter Listman             | 7—John M. C. Peterson        |
| 3—John Confer                | 8—Paul Grattan               |
| 4—Leslie E. Bemont           | 9—Edward D. Treacy           |
| 5—Dr. Fritz G. Scheider      | 10—Stephen B. Dempsey        |

*652 Kenwood Avenue, Slingerlands, New York 12159*



## WILSON'S WARBLER NESTS IN NEW YORK STATE

DAN NICKERSON

On Friday, June 30, 1978, while birding in the North Meadow, situated just off the Adirondak Loj Road in the town of North Elba, Essex Co., I located and photographed a male and a female Wilson's Warbler. On Saturday, August 1, I returned to the same area and after a one-hour search, I found a nest and three eggs of a Wilson's Warbler. This is the first report of a nest of this species in New York State.

Bent (1963, *Life Histories of North American Wood Warblers*, *Bull. U.S.N.M.* 203, p. 635), describes the Wilson's Warbler as nesting in eastern North America in the southern provinces of Canada and in the states of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. According to



*Wilson's Warbler—North Elba, Essex Co.*  
*June 30, 1978* *Dan Nickerson*

Bull (1974 *Birds of New York State*, p. 518) “. . . no summering—let alone breeding—has been substantiated in New York to date.” Both Carleton (1976. *Birds of Essex County*,) and Beehler (1978, *Birdlife of the Adirondack Park*) describe the Wilson's Warbler as a migrant species with a late spring date of June 6 (Carleton).

The favored breeding habitat of the Wilson's Warbler is described by various authors as areas of brushy bogs, swamp borders, alder swales and alder-covered hillsides. It is associated with such northern flora and fauna as sphagnum moss, balsam fir, black spruce and Palm and Tennessee Warblers.

There are at least three reports of summer sightings of Wilson's Warbler in New York State. Two were reported by Alice Jones and Helen Manson—one on June 28, 1972, on the Wilmington Road in North Elba, and another in Newcomb, also in Essex Co., on June 30, 1977. Another sighting was made by Gordon Meade on June 28, 1977, near the bridge over the St. Regis River on the road into Madawaska, Franklin Co. All of these sightings were of singing males; two of them near water bordered by alders.

The North Meadow is an area of overgrown pasture, partially flooded by beaver activity, located on the Adirondack Loj road a few miles from the Village of Lake Placid in the town of North Elba. It is located at the base of the High Peaks of the Adirondacks. From North Meadow several peaks over four thousand feet in elevation can be seen. The elevation of North Meadow is approximately 1900 feet. This area was studied by the ornithologist Aretas Saunders in the summers of 1925 and 1926 while he was a visitor at Wood Farm on the Loj Road. Wood Farm included the area known as North Meadow. Saunders describes the vegetation and birdlife of this area in the 1929 volume of the *Roosevelt Wildlife Bulletin*.

In the area of the Wilson's Warbler nest, the most conspicuous ground cover is meadowsweet or *Spiraea*. *Spiraea* grows to a height of one to five feet in clearings between white and red spruce, tamarack and balsam fir, which grow at an average height of fifteen to thirty feet with a maximum diameter at breast height of about eight inches. These evergreens are spaced sometimes in clumps of a half dozen trees; sometimes they occur singly. Broad open patches of *Spiraea* occur between the evergreens. Quaking aspen, fire cherry, white pine, alders and willows also occur here. Ground covers include blueberry, goldenrod, strawberry, grasses, sedges, mosses and hawkweed. This area was formerly used as pasture which may account

for the present spacing of evergreens.

The area in which the nest was found slopes gently to a beaver-flooded marsh which Saunders described as a "swampy meadow with trout brooks." The beaver activity and subsequent flooding have occurred since Saunder's time. Evergreens, willow and alder form a dense marsh border.



*Wilson's Warbler Nest and Eggs—North Elba, Essex Co.  
August 1, 1978* *Dan Nickerson*

On the days that the Wilson's Warblers were observed, Ring-billed Gulls, Green Herons, Blue-winged Teals, Common Snipe and Swamp Sparrows were also seen on the marsh. On the pasture above the marsh, Song Sparrows, Yellow-rumped, Magnolia and Blackburnian Warblers, Red-eyed Vireos, American Redstarts, Common Yellowthroats, Purple Finches, White-throated Sparrows, American Goldfinches, Gray Catbirds, and Cedar Waxwings were noted and were probably breeding. Rather uncommon species (even for the Adirondacks) such as Rusty Blackbird, Lincoln's Sparrow and Ruby-crowned

Kinglet were also sighted. Of these species only Lincoln's Sparrow was found by Saunders. Ruby-crowned Kinglets undoubtedly nest here. Several singing males were heard and in 1976 a nest was found by the author at Adirondak Loj only a few miles away.

The first Wilson's Warbler was observed at North Meadow at about 8 a.m., about six feet from the ground in a deciduous shrub next to a balsam fir in a generally open area of the abandoned pasture perhaps thirty yards from the marsh border. It was observed with the naked eye and through the view-finder of a SLR camera with a 300-mm lens. The yellow color and black cap were observed and the bird was photographed. The photographs show it to be a male Wilson's Warbler.

This bird crossed part of the clearing to an alder clump and then disappeared into a dense stand of alders bordering the marsh. Two songs were heard which were poorly documented by the author and remembered as having consisted of two or more accented *chip* notes followed by a descending series of run-together notes descending in both pitch and volume. The bird was not seen uttering these notes. No male Wilson's Warbler was observed or heard at any other time thereafter.

A few moments later another bird was observed at a height of about six to ten feet in a balsam fir. This bird was observed at greater length and was identified as a female Wilson's Warbler by the brownish color of the wings and back and by the presence of a distinct dark cap. This bird was observed for a half-hour or more through 7 x 35 binoculars, feeding in the branches of willows and firs at a height of approximately three to fifteen feet. It was watched carefully for any carrying of food in the bill or other evidences of visits to a nest. Because of the density of the cover it was sometimes out of sight for several seconds.

For most of the next fifteen to thirty minutes the bird flitted among the branches of one particular willow and one particular fir. It continued feeding but at one time began uttering soft *chet* notes, similar to, but softer than, those of a Common Yellowthroat, as it flitted among the lower branches of the willow. The presence of a nest in this area was suspected although the presence of chicks seemed unlikely, as the bird was not seen carrying food or fecal sacs in her bill.

After perhaps a total of forty-five minutes of observation, the bird disappeared. The lower branches of the fir and willow and the

ground nearby were checked in vain for a nest. A wait of five or ten minutes produced no bird and I left.

The next morning at about seven a.m. the female was again found in the same area. Again as she approached the lower branches of the willow she uttered the soft *chet* calls. Soon she disappeared and the author approached again to check the area for a nest. The female Wilson's Warbler flushed from a point behind the author about eight feet from the base of the fir. A quick search revealed no nest. The author withdrew to a greater distance and this time watched the female make several false starts into the clearing away from the willow. Her progress was followed only by the movement of the low dense *Spiraea*. After a few moments she again disappeared. Again the area was approached and again the bird flushed from behind the author. This time a nest was located about three feet from the author's feet beneath a hummock of moss, about six feet from the overhanging branches of the willow and twelve feet from the base of the fir.

The nest was made mostly of grass and held three eggs. Each egg was creamy pink in color with reddish-brown speckles. These were densely concentrated toward the blunt end of the egg and more



*Wilson's Warbler Egg—North Elba, Essex Co.  
August 1, 1978* Dan Nickerson

lightly dispersed over the rest of the egg. A slug was on one of the eggs. The slug was removed.

The next day the author returned to the nest site with John M. C. Peterson. The bird flushed when we attempted to photograph it on the nest from a distance of four feet. One egg lay about a foot from the nest. It was photographed and returned to the nest. The bird was observed for several minutes and Peterson confirmed the identification of the bird. Again the bird disappeared, but after a short time it was again flushed from the nest; it evidently approaches the nest fairly secretively.

To summarize, a nest and three eggs of a Wilson's Warbler were located in the North Meadow in North Elba, Essex Co., on August 1, 1978. This is the first recorded nesting of this species in New York State.

The area in which the nest was found was studied by the ornithologist Aretas Saunders in 1925 and 1926. He did not find the Wilson's Warbler here. Ruby-crowned Kinglets probably nest here; these also were apparently absent in Saunders' time. Rusty Blackbird is also a possible recent resident of the area. This leads to speculation that some of these northern species may be becoming more numerous in the Adirondacks. On the other hand, changes in physiography due to beaver activity and successional changes in the vegetation since the abandonment of the North Meadow as a pasture make it difficult to draw any conclusions in this specific instance. The several recent summer reports of Wilson's Warbler may indicate that this species is extending its range southward. Surely this bird should be watched for and the bird's presence in our area monitored.

*R R No. 3, Box 341, Freeport, Maine 04032*

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The following correction should be made in the 1975 bibliography, published in *Kingbird* 27 (4): 196: For Brooks, Betsy. Bird of the Month: Cooper's Hawk, read Brooks, Elizabeth and Lou L. Burton.

Corrections or omissions should be called to the attention of the Bibliography Committee: Sally Hoyt Spofford, Chairman; John B. Belknap, Allen H. Benton and Kenneth C. Parkes. Local newsletters and journals with noteworthy articles should be sent to the Chairman, first class mail.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON

VIVIAN MILLS FITZTRICK  
GUEST EDITOR

Sunshine—beautiful sunshine—even on weekends, made it a “summer idyllic,” as Robert Spahn expresses it for Region 2. Not all was sunshine and roses, however. Nestlings were killed in Region 1 during the cold, windy spell in the second week of June, and upstate, not until the last week of the month was there promise of the later-realized hot and very dry season to contrast that of the three previous summers. Reversing things a bit, Region 9 had a warm, dry June and a cool, wet August, but Region 10 was “cooler and wetter than average,” after a late spring. Region 4, in the midst of it all, held steady with the weather just about perfect—not too anything. The dry season upstate produced “the best shorebird habitat conditions in three years” in Region 5, and promised exposed flats for fall in Region 7. Nevertheless, Region 3 found mudflats once more severely limited because of high lake levels and, at the same time, “dried-up” ponds and fields.

For a careful treatise on changing habitat and its effects on bird populations, note Dr. Scheider’s account for Region 5. This brings to mind the plight of the Eastern Bluebird which requires open areas and consequently relinquishes the abandoned farms to encroaching brush and trees. Encouraging our state bird are certainly the many faithfully maintained bluebird trails, from the single box to as many as time, energy and financial status permit. Across the state the species was variously noted as steady (1,4) or producing well (9), but scarce elsewhere. Of course, and more’s the pity, not all results from nesting boxes were reported. Like so many others, bird-banders and those documenting nests are already buried in paper work, and a special merit badge should be awarded those who do send out that “one more” bird-in-the-hand record to the regional editors. It is this sort of consistent drudgery that lends significance to the fun of birding.

Again, results from breeding bird surveys including several taken in Christmas Count circles, were used to help determine trends, but this year’s cold June in some sections made comparison with previous years almost impossible. It is good to note that in these, as well as most “Counts,” actual numbers of birds, not just a lazy checklist of species, are tallied. These provide a wealth of data, useful when carefully tempered with caution, of course, because of the numerous inevitable variables.



For the most part, migration was slow to normal, but with several late spring warblers and many early fall transients. Again this year Region 2 noted appreciable numbers of immature Red-tailed Hawks starting through in mid-August.

With five regions commenting on the low numbers, even though good variety, of birds, we wonder if the prophecy of "Silent Spring" is being fulfilled in our lifetime. Surely, nearly silenced were the American Bittern (1,2,10) and its little cousin, the Least Bittern (2,5). Some good news for the recently declining Pied-billed Grebe was the record high count in Region 1; however, in 2, 5 and 6, the usual low numbers prevailed. A first summer appearance for the St. Lawrence River was the Red-necked Grebe (6). Double-crested Cormorants were plentiful in 6, 8 and 10 but much fewer in lower Hudson (9). Although white herons were scarce in 1, 2, 3 and 5, a first nesting for the Cattle Egret was proven for 6 at Galloo Island, and it was also found in 2 and in "remarkable" numbers at a new location in 10. Black-crowned Night Herons either did well (1,9,10) or were noteworthy for their scarcity (2,3,5,6). The Mute Swan showed up in 1, was thought to be nesting in 7 and produced at least one youngster in 9. While some birders were rejoicing over the unusual numbers of Canada Geese summering here (1,5,6,7), in Palisades Interstate Park (9) the birds were so much "Everywhere!" that personnel from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were forced to trap some 500 and release them where they wouldn't foul golf greens and beaches. In defiance of well-publicized "absorption" of the Black Duck by the Mallard, good numbers of Blacks persisted in 3 and 7. The species is still in trouble in 1 and 4, and is so scarce in 6 that, next to the Mallard, the Gadwall is now the most common breeder. Wood Duck production was excellent except in Central Suffolk (10) where it declined significantly.

Accipiters were doing fairly well in only four regions, and a scattering of Red-shouldered Hawks was reported, including immatures, all across the state except from Region 10. The hawk breeding season was called "a disaster" in Region 1 where, in addition to natural calamities, human predators carried off a brood of Goshawk nestlings. As long as there are still among us those who are way behind the times in knowledge of the beneficial role of raptors in nature's scheme of things, as well as others who use such species for their own nefarious and often illegal purposes, continued caution in disclosure of such nestings must be exercised. The Marsh Hawk breeding popu-

lation was only fair in five regions, but was thriving in Region 6. While seven regions continue to see Ospreys, including good numbers in 6 and 8, apparently last year's phenomenal success for the species in Region 10 is joyously continuing and merits no special mention. How about that? In pure delight, we agree with Lee Chamberlaine (6) that so many eagles boggles the mind. Mostly Bald, but one Golden, being reported from seven regions across the state really is encouraging, whether from southern birds summering here or from hard-won results of the diligent breeding program.

The Spruce Grouse is dying out in 7 and Gray Partridges this year were not doing so well in 6. The Ring-necked Pheasant continues to decline, the "put and take" basis by the Department of Environmental Conservation, as Ted Mack states it (7), apparently having degenerated to too little "put" and too much "take." Whip-poor-wills 'tho scarce in 9 were at four locations in 7 and also appeared in 2, 3 and 4. Not until migration did the Common Nighthawk appear in fair numbers.

In general, with some variation across the state, most flycatchers were in dire straits, not even pulling out during the breeding season. A notable exception was the Acadian Flycatcher, identified in 1, found in high numbers in 3, suggesting breeding, and watched "in all areas" of 9 with many nests discovered—just bursting at the seams.

One rough winter was bad enough, but a second on top of it augmented the decimation among Tufted Titmice, most wrens, including the Carolina, and Brown Thrashers. Region 10 found Bobwhites also hard hit for the same reason. The Mockingbird, too, was absent or scarce in most areas but was holding its own in 10 and nesting in 3 and 5. With Cedar Waxwings bumper to bumper in 1, 4, 5, 7 and 9, how could Region 6 miss out with them? A family group of Loggerhead Shrikes was located in Carlton (2) but otherwise the species, like old soldiers, continues to just fade away.

White-eyed Vireos were called "alarmingly scarce" in 10. Prairie Warbler numbers were expanding rapidly in Region 1 where Clarence Klingensmith found the first active nest for the region near Alfred. More than usual of the species were noted also in Region 2. Worth watching is the Yellow-rumped Warbler population growth that has been going on gradually for several years in Regions 1 and 4. However, the high note for all the warblers was that first verified nesting for New York State of the Wilson's Warbler, found by Dan Nickerson near North Elba (7).

Careful reading of the regional reports which follow shows that several species, including the Scarlet Tanager, were less plentiful this season. Is this decline cyclic, is it a function of the breeding survey variables,—or will it continue? Although the vulnerability of the House Sparrow to severe winters is well known, they seem to recuperate during the following breeding season. Some are hoping it may be replaced by the thriving House Finch. Ed Treacy suggests the possibility that this latter species may also be ousting the Purple Finch (9). There seems little relief in sight for the sparrow family, except for the White-throat, which seems to be doing well and staying late in several areas, suggesting a wider breeding range.

The regional editors have all sorts of gems well worth searching out, such as a partial albino Solitary Sandpiper (3), a diaper-using Boreal Chickadee (7), a pioneering (?) Red-bellied Woodpecker (8), a “silver” Common Grackle (6), Ruby-crowned Kinglets (7) and Pine Siskins (1,2,3,8,10) so late as to lead to nest hunting, but without success, a sea-going House Sparrow (10), and an out-of-season Evening Grosbeak (2). This year Region 10 reports the first active Laughing Gull nest on Long Island since 1890. Here also, among other notables, are the results from the Cox’s Ledge pelagic trips. We join Region 10 in regret for the loss of naturalist S. Leroy Wilcox who will be greatly missed.

With the hope of arousing curiosity over the many exciting rarities for the season found across the state, only a few are included here: the White Pelican (3,6), Yellow-crowned Night Heron (2,10), Wood Stork (1), Black Vulture (10), Sandhill Crane (10 and “possible” 3), Ruff (1), Pomarine Jaeger (2), Thayer’s Gull (2), Laughing Gull (2—nesting in 10), Chuck-will’s-widow—all through the season (10), Acadian Flycatcher—noted above (1,2,9), “Brewster’s” Warbler—not so rare, but interesting to compare with its hybrid relative (1,3,5,6,9), “Lawrence’s” Warbler—that hybrid relative (5,9), Yellow-throated Warbler (9), Orchard Oriole—becoming established (1,3,9), “possible” Blue Grosbeak—more than probable in view of its tremendous range expansion southwest of us (3), Painted Bunting, “a female in mint condition”—first for the region (5), and Clay-colored Sparrow (1,4,7).

However, the best of all unusual summer finds is the Western Grebe discovered in Tupper Lake (7) by Charlcie Delehanty, observed by many, described and photographed. This documentation removes the species from the New York State hypothetical list and must certainly be given the BOTS award. Congratulations!

*Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813*

## REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

VIVIAN MILLS PITZRICK

After a slow start, this was a great season with morning after morning a sunny summer wonderland of dewy silks splendoring the grass. Of course, the dew-soaked bushwhacking birder's appreciation was somewhat dampened as black flies, deer flies and the like penetrated his euphoria when he forgot the insect repellent. In spite of small showers falling periodically, the only big rain being 1.2 in. (3 cm.) on June 8th, it was a dry season with stunted crops. Grasses matured early, encouraging a record-early Am. Goldfinch nestling-fledgling achievement. However, the exceptionally cold June and cool July delayed migration and some nestings, including one record-late Yellow-rumped Warbler. A terrible period of persistent cold winds and scattered frost between June 12th and 16th killed tender nestlings, among which were Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows. In contrast, August was a scorcher with a mean temperature (and it was mean!) above normal by  $4.1^{\circ}$  F. ( $2.3^{\circ}$  C.). This was a season of abundant wild foods and unusually large numbers of wild bee colonies.

Results of 18 out of 19 runs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) were low except for those taken during the final week in June. Findings from 16 of the 17 routes of the Allegany Co. "Mini Run" Breeding Bird Survey (Abbs) were near normal. Below, status for a species is indicated as: H+ = highest ever, or tied, H = one of top three totals, sd+ = above one standard deviation, S = stable, sd- = below one standard deviation, L = one of low three totals, or L- = lowest ever, or tied. A breeding bird census (SEBC) along the 30-mi. stretch of the Allegheny R. from Portville to the Allegheny Reservoir, June 5-9, recorded 66 species with the three most common as: Com. Grackle, 198; Red-winged Blackbird, 186; and Song Sparrow, 154. The three most prevalent of eight warbler species were: Yellow Warbler, 64; Am. Redstart, 35; and Com. Yellowthroat, 27 (S. Eaton).

Summer positives include: 1) an exciting vagrant—even for State records, 2) Pied-billed Grebes and Great Blue Herons at an all time high and Green Herons doing better, 3) Canada Geese again here all season, 4) good reports of Mallards, and Com. and Hooded Mergansers, 5) Turkey Vultures in fine shape with first Allegany Co. nest discovered, 6) barely stable Ruffed Grouse population and widespread reports of Turkey poults, 7) dandy issue of owl postage stamps and more Great Horned Owl activity, 8) regular appearance of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Pileated, Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers, 9) severe depletion of Starlings, House Sparrows and Com. Grackles, 10) Barn and Cliff Swallows doing well, 11) Am. Robins on a sharp upswing and E. Bluebirds holding steady, 12) enormous jump in Cedar Waxwing breeding population, 13) Warbling Vireos and Prairie Warblers expanding, 14) Orchard Orioles becoming established, and 15) expanding range for the White-throated Sparrow, the only member of this family showing increase.

Negatives for the season are: 1) generally low numbers of birds, 2) continued scarcity of Am. Bitterns and Black Ducks, 3) a disastrous breeding season for

many hawks, 4) continued decline of Ring-necked Pheasants, 5) unimpressive shorebird flight, 6) few reports of either cuckoo and slippage in the owl-reporting department, 7) lower numbers of Belted Kingfishers, Com. Flickers, and both Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, 8) deep trouble for flycatchers, Horned Larks and most swallows (nesting shelves under curved culverts, etc. are readily accepted by E. Phoebes and mud-nesting swallows), 9) almost no Tufted Titmice, and low wren counts, the theory of "enhanced fecundity" for winter-ravaged species not holding for House Wrens, 10) scarcity of Brown Thrashers, 11) light warbler flight, 12) almost no reports of Black-and-white or Golden-winged Warblers and poor breeding success for Yellow Warblers, 13) low numbers of E. Meadowlarks and Scarlet Tanagers and fewer breeding pairs of the Red-winged Blackbird and Am. Goldfinch, and 14) generally poor sparrow numbers.

Rarities include: Wood Stork, Mute Swan, Goshawk, Bald Eagle, King Rail, Western Sandpiper, Ruff, Wilson's Phalarope, Acadian Flycatcher, Prothonotary Warbler, "Brewster's" Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Orchard Oriole, House Finch, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

Abbreviations: BOS—Buffalo Ornithological Society; GMA or WMA—Game or Wildlife Management Area; NP or NS—Nature Preserve or Sanctuary; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; Res—Reservoir; SF or SP—State Forest or Park.

Contributors: Robert Andrie, Elizabeth Brooks, Doris Burton, Lou Burton, Donald Clark, Ed Curtis (Weather Data, Wellsville), Dan DuVarney, Stephen Eaton, John Forness, Mary Forness (MFr), David Freeland, Helen Graves, Matthew Hotchkiss, Harriette Klabunde, Walter Klabunde (BBS Compiler), Clarence Klingensmith (Abbs Compiler), Raymond Pitzrick, Vivian Pitzrick, Frances Rew, James VanScoy, Regina VanScoy; and initialed Observers: Norman Ives, Alice McKale, Willard McKale, Harold Mitchell, Robert Sundell.

LOONS—DUCKS: Notable long-legged wader reports include: a Great Egret at Mowatt's Pond, Laidlaw Rd., Farmersville Twp, June 4; max 21 Black-crowned Night Herons at Niagara Falls June 17; single Least Bitterns at Iroquois NWR June 11 and at Lackawanna Aug. 11; and two Am. Bitterns at Tonawanda WMA June 11. The Bird of the Season in this Region is the WOOD STORK, formerly "Wood Ibis" (*Mycteria americana*), three individuals being watched off Rt. 305 north of Portville Aug. 11-24 (JF, MFr + mob). Previously, in our Region, one of these "flintheads" was seen in late June, 1932 (not 1939 as erroneously given sometimes) near Fillmore by K. Palmer who called in Prof. Raymond Douglas, then ornithology professor at Houghton College, who confirmed her identification. Single MUTE SWANS (same bird?) were found at Times Beach irregularly July 12-Aug. 23 (RA DF+). Interesting duck reports were: at least 12 Gadwalls, total, from three areas; max. 100 Blue-winged Teals at Times Beach Aug. 30; max 15 Am. Wigeons at Porter Ave., Buffalo, Aug. 30; an early White-winged Scoter at Forest Lawn Aug. 2 (Schaffner); and four Red-breasted Mergansers in Amity Twp Aug. 29.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Extraordinary status on the breeding surveys was found for: Cooper's Hawk, two (H+) on BBS, and Red-tailed Hawk, two (L-) on Abbs. The first recorded Turkey Vulture's nest in Allegany Co. was discovered under a rock formation in June by N. Ives. (He reported: "stench—unbelievable!"). Two young were fledged. Some hawk nestings were disastrous. From three GOSHAWK nests, one fledged two yg, one was lost to a Great Horned Owl, and human predators carried off two yg. from the third. A Cooper's Hawk nest successfully produced two yg. From three Red-shouldered Hawk nests, one raised two yg. and two were lost to predation, one possibly from a Great Horned Owl. Two Broad-winged Hawk nests produced at least one yg. (outcome of one nest unknown), and two Am. Kestrel nests fledged six yg. At least nine Sharp-shinned and five Cooper's Hawks

appeared, usually as singles in scattered locations. At Allegheny Res. two imm. **BALD EAGLES** were sighted Aug. 28 (JF, MFr). Eight Marsh Hawks were tallied from seven locations. A late Osprey was seen at Wanakah June 18 (DF) but only two other areas reported singles. A rare **KING RAIL** was identified at Oak Orchard WMA June 11 (DF). Choice plover and sandpiper reports include: Am. Golden Plover, one at Clarence Aug. 26; Black-bellied Plover, max. six at Clarence Aug. 26; Whimbrel, up to two at Times Beach Aug. 2, 30 (Schaffner, RA+); Willet, one at Times Beach Aug. 16, 27 (RA+); Red Knot, five at Times Beach Aug. 31 (RA+); White-rumped Sandpiper, eight at Iroquois NWR June 11 (DF); Baird's Sandpiper, two at Buffalo Harbor Aug. 8 (DF); Dunlin, three noted from two areas; Stilt Sandpiper, at least four counted from three locations; a **WESTERN SANDPIPER** at Buffalo Harbor Aug. 16 (RA, Foster); a **RUFF** at Tonawanda WMA Aug. 6 (Collinses); and an early **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** at South Buffalo July 12, 13 (DF). Summer larid noteworthys were few but interesting: Franklin's Gull, two at Times Beach Aug. 26, 31; Little Gull, at least nine tallied from two L. Erie areas where up to four Forster's Terns and a Caspian Tern were seen in late Aug.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** Breeding surveys found most flycatchers with "L-" status with the E. Phoebe still on the skids through the nesting cycles. A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was located at East Amherst on Aug. 21 (DF) and another appeared at Lewiston Aug. 25 (HK, WK+). Two **ACADIAN FLYCATCHERS** were identified in Allegany SP June 3 (DF, RS). Probably late migrants rather than breeding birds were the single Olive-sided Flycatchers along the Allegheny R June 9 (SE) and on the BBS near Swain June 26 (EB, CK). 35,000 Purple Martins gathered at Porter Ave., Buffalo, Aug. 25 (Brownstein). A single Tufted Titmouse was found at East Amherst July 8 (DF)—only report, and single Cofolina Wrens were found only in South Valley Twp June 3 (DF) and in the Alfred area June 6 (CK). However, the Long-billed Marsh Wrens were out in full force in June with max. 31 at Tift Farm the 7th (DF). A Short-billed Marsh Wren was seen at Tonawanda WMA Aug. 6 (AM, WM). The E. Bluebird was well reported with 40 individuals as total from seven locations. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was found for the BBS and two were watched near Portville Aug. 19 (JF, MFr). Back on old breeding grounds were four Golden-crowned Kinglets near Alfred June 4-July 30 (EB, CK) and one at Iroquois NWR June 11 (DF).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Four (S) Yellow-throated Vireos were noted on BBS, one in South Valley Twp June 3 (DF), but 12 (!) on SEBC. Dramatic breeding survey warbler ratings were: Blue-winged Warbler, 25 (H+) on Abbs; Nashville Warbler, nine (H+) on Abbs; Chestnut-sided Warbler, 54 (H+) on Abbs; **PRAIRIE WARBLER**, one (H+) on BBS for first time; Mourning Warbler, six (L-) on BBS; Com. Yellowthroat, 207 (H+) on Abbs; and Hooded Warbler, nine (H+) on BBS. Three **PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS** faithfully appeared again at Iroquois NWR June 11 (DF), and a "**BREWSTER'S**" **WARBLER** was identified in Amity Twp June 23 (VP). Other noteworthy warbler sightings include: a Tennessee Warbler at East Amherst Aug. 21, a late N. Parula at Limestone June 2, 3 (JV, RV) and eight (!) also late, at Allegany SP June 3, 4 (DF+); a Cape May Warbler, late, at Ellcottville June 2 (DF); a Cerulean Warbler on Abbs; a late Blackpoll Warbler at East Amherst June 10 and first of fall migration at the same place Aug. 21 (DF); a Louisiana Waterthrush on Abbs—new this year; and a Yellow-breasted Chat in South Valley Twp June 3 and another at Pembroke Aug. 14 (DF). Four Magnolia nests near Alfred fledged five yg. (EB) and a yg. N. Waterthrush was seen being fed by an adult (CK). Yellow-rumped Warbler expansion continues in the Alfred area where at least seven yg. were produced from five nests, one of which was very late, with three eggs Aug. 6 (EB) and at least one nestling Aug. 14 (CK). This is 27 days past the record final egg date and 23 days past the latest nestling date for N.Y. State. Also in the Alfred area, the first Regional **PRAIRIE WARBLER** nest was found on Moland Rd. with four yg. in nest June 24 (CK, documented by EB). At least two yg. were fledged. Adults of the species numbered no less than four during June and July in the Alfred area and another adult appeared irregularly in Amity Twp, near Amity L June 5-July 15 (VP).

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** For the first time, the **ORCHARD ORIOLE** appeared on BBS with two seen feeding yg. in the nest! A new location for the **HOUSE FINCH** is Canasaraga where three were watched during June (L. Harvey). Pine Siskins tarried well into June with two at Belmont June 1-24 (DB, LB) and nine at Allegany SP June 4 (DF+). Although the Am. Goldfinch registered "L-" on both BBS (316) and Abbs (95), 89% of the 19 nests found near Amity L successfully raised 65 yg.; one of these nests was earlier by nine days than the previous N.Y. State record, having four nestlings July 24 which fledged Aug. 8 (VP). With the exception of the expanding White-throated Sparrow population, with three (H) on BBS and five (S) on Abbs, all sparrows were scarce on breeding surveys. Noteworthy sparrow reports other than breeding surveys include: Grasshopper, three tallied from two areas; Henslow, 14 noted from four locations; Vesper, one at Newstead June 9, the only report; and a **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** at Grand Island June 16 where one was seen in late May (DF).

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

## REGION 2 – GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

Excepting a few bright flashes, this season may be characterized as dull, certainly by comparison to many of the recent seasons in this Region. June began on a cool, showery note, but then in the last week slipped into the start of a long, hot, dry spell; by the third week of July only .17 inch (.43 cm) of rain had been recorded since June 10. Much of the first three weeks of July was also very hot, temperatures in the 90's. During the final ten days of July the official rainfall total rose to 2.1 inches (5.3 cm), very nearly normal for the month. However, most of this occurred as widely scattered thunderstorms with local amounts highly variable. August passed as "summer idyllic"; showers were well-spaced, temperatures moderate, and weekends near perfect. Unfortunately, while the last third of the month saw many periods of northerly winds, there were no major fronts and only one notable push of migrants was documented.

Observer trends generally followed the long-established summer pattern—most simply took a long vacation from the drudgery of filling out or filing field trip reports. Those who did venture afield, or at least those reporting such ventures, did contribute many good records. Once again this year, increased coverage in the hills south of Rochester was very fruitful. A potential baseline for future documentation in this area was the first annual breeding bird census covering a circle only slightly shifted from the Little Lakes CBC circle. The first few hours of this were covered using standard breeding-bird-census-route techniques, with additional coverage as area leaders desired. The two parts were separately totalled. On June 18, 99 species were recorded. As they did last summer, observers began hawk-watching in mid-August and again noted a good number of immature Red-tailed Hawks migrating.

Once again this summer, several observers commented on the low volume of the dawn chorus even by early June. Numbers of species were still high, but numbers of individuals seemed low. It remains to be seen over succeeding years whether this trend is cyclic or long-term. Species definitely noted as scarce were: both bitterns, Black-crowned Night Heron, Ring-necked Pheasant, Common Nighthawk, Least Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Warbling Vireo, Grasshopper, Henslow's and Vesper Sparrows. The brighter side was a bit dim, but good numbers were reported for both cuckoos, Common and Caspian Terns, and August's migrant Tree, Bank and Barn Swallows. There were excellent numbers of Blue-winged Warblers at Letchworth Park; elsewhere in the Region this type of influx has been at the expense of the Golden-winged Warbler and has given rise to a boom in Brewster's hybrids.

Rarities: Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Whistling Swan, Willet, Northern Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Thayer's Gull, Laughing Gull, Franklin's Gull, Prairie Warbler, Evening Grosbeak. Details (verification report forms) are on file with the Genesee Ornithological Society for the Northern Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, and Prairie Warbler.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddock Bay; IC—Island Cottage Woods, Greece; LP—Letchworth State Park; PB—Point Breeze; WL—West Lakeshore.

Observers: Mike Carlson, Julie Claffey, Roger Clark, Bob & Dottie Coffee, Jerry Czech, Mike Davids, James & Gertrude Davis, Jean & Neil Killey, Frank & Robert Dobson, Kay Doris, Mike Ehlers, June Feder, John Foster, Genesee Ornithological Society, Kevin Griffith, Tom Griswold, Bill Hartranft, Robert & Sandra Hazen, Norm Henderson, Allen Kinnitzer, Walter & Harriette Klabunde, Ray Ladwig, Edith Lank, Jim Lenhard, Walter & Jim Listman, Warren Lloyd, Hayward Madden, Bob & Margaret McKinney, Joe & Thelma McNett, Mike Menuhin, Hyde Miller, Ann Miranian, B. & E. Molyneaux, Laura & Neil Moon, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, Betty Perrigo, Chip Perrigo, Mike & Tom Peter, Rochester Birding Association, Marge Schmale, Dominic Sherony, Jeanne & Sharon Skelly, Virginia Skuse, Robert & Susan Spahn, Ann Stear, Helen Steinhauser, Harriet Stride, William Symonds, Mary Ann Sunderlin, Steve Taylor, David, Mike & Tom Tetlow, David Tremmel, Eleanor Weld, Munro Will, Doris Wilton.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon was reported well into June on Lake Ontario: last record, one BB June 17. Single Horned Grebes were reported in both June and July. As usual, Pied-billed Grebes were scarce this season. Single Double-crested Cormorants were noted at BB June 5-13 and July 10-17. Notable among the herons were: Great Egret: one Kendall June 16-17; Cattle Egret: one Hamlin June 8 (NH); and **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON**: one adult Carlton July 22 (RBA). Black-crowned Night Herons and both Least and Am. Bitterns were notable by their scarcity.

A very rare summer occurrence of **WHISTLING SWAN**: two PB Aug. 6 (AS) was reported. Fewer lingering and non-breeding waterfowl were sighted on the "borrow" pits along the Lake Ontario Parkway west of Hamlin Beach State Park than has been typical of the past several years, but June and July records included: Pintail, Am. Wigeon, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Greater and Lesser Scaup, and Bufflehead. Most of those records were singles. In addition, both Com. and Red-breasted Mergansers lingered at BB to June 19.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS**: The spring hawk flight watch continued at BB thru June with Laura Moon, *et al.*, on hand daily. Significant additions to the count in June were: 91 Turkey Vultures, 635 Broad-winged Hawks, mostly immatures, two Golden Eagles, and 14 Ospreys. The last date of significant numbers of bird passing was June 12. Other interesting raptor



records included: Goshawk: one imm. Perinton Aug. 6; one imm. Webster Aug. 15-16; one imm. Webster Aug. 24; and one Irondequoit Aug. 27; Cooper's Hawk: one LP June 24; one Hamlin Aug. 26; and one imm. Webster Aug. 28-30; Red-tailed Hawk: 83 BB Aug. 16; 263 BB Aug. 17; and 267 BB Aug. 19, nearly all of these being immatures and the dates match well with a similar movement noted last summer; Red-shouldered Hawk: one LP June 24; Bald Eagle: one imm. Hamlin June 6; one imm. Clyde July 2; one imm. BB Aug. 17; and one imm. PB Aug. 18, wing-tagged; and Osprey: one Greece Aug. 27. In addition, the Bald Eagles of the Hemlock Lake nest were checked periodically thru the season. A single Turkey: LP June 4 (TT), was recorded. Rails were a bit easier to find than last year, but still not abundantly reported. Good numbers were: Virginia Rail: 11 Chili July 20; and Sora: 14 Chili July 20. Shorebird habitat was very scarce this season; lake levels were still very high and fields and ponds dried up. A few beaches and the borrow pits in the west lakeshore area provided the bulk of the records. Of note were: Black-bellied Plover: one imm. PB July 8 (CP); Whimbrel: one Kendall Aug. 4; one Charlotte Aug. 26; and one Kendall Aug. 31; Upland Sandpiper: max. 16 PB June 23; Short-billed Dowitcher: max. 75 PB & Kendall July 8; Stilt Sandpiper: two Kendall July 8; and one BB July 14; Spotted Sandpiper: max. 50 WL June 17; WILLET: one Carlton July 14-16 (WS, mob); Baird's Sandpiper: one PB July 23; Western Sandpiper: four WL June 4 (WLi); two Kendall June 17 (J & WLi, CP); one Charlotte Aug. 6-8 (F & RD, RO); and two Chili Aug. 9 (NH); NORTHERN PHALAROPE: one Perinton June 3-4 (MT, mob); and Wilson's Phalarope: seven records scattered thru the season. The premier local record of the season was an adult, light morph POMARINE JAEGER: BB & Charlotte June 19-26 (JCl, WLi, mob, photo NH). Gulls provided additional excitement with: Great Black-backed Gull reported each month; THAYER'S GULL: one adult PB June 17 (photo KG); Ring-billed: max. 10,000 WL June 17 (WLi, mob); LAUGHING GULL: one adult Kendall June 4 (WLi) and BB June 11 (M & RM), probably the same bird; and FRANKLIN'S GULL: one Hamlin Aug. 31 (WS). Tern records were typical with a late Aug. peak. Maxima included: Forster's Tern: 42 BB Aug. 25 (NH), an unprecedented number, otherwise, one to five thru the season; Com. Tern: 91 BB Aug. 30 (NH); and Caspian Tern: 27 BB Aug. 14.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: A Region-wide infestation of tent caterpillars has proved attractive to cuckoos. Highest counts, reportedly associated with a gypsy moth outbreak, were: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: six, Penfield June; and Black-billed Cuckoo: five, Penfield June. Subsequent spraying reduced the moths and dispersed (hopefully) the cuckoos. A lone summer Whip-poor-will: Irondequoit June 30, was heard calling. Given the sad state of Com. Nighthawk in Rochester, a large migrant flock was encouraging: 100+ Rochester Aug. 30 (B & EM). Good evidence of breeding of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the Region was: three imm. LP July 15 (RBA).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Some of the flycatchers seemed scarce in the dawn chorus in habitat where they were expected, e.g. Great Crested, Least, and Eastern Phoebe. However, there were several records suggestive of breeding Acadian Flycatchers: two males and one female Bergen Swamp June 17 (RBA); one Bergen Swamp June 17 (ME,DT); one LP June 3-22 (RBA, mob); one Honeoye Lake June 18 (RS); one (separate individual) LP June 18 (M&TT); and one LP July 15 (RBA). Additionally, there was a good count of Alder Flycatchers: 25 Little Lakes June 11 (F&RD); and Olive-sided Flycatcher was well-reported with eight early June and three late Aug. records. Very scarce in passage the past two years, a probable breeding Winter Wren was noted: Bergen Swamp July 1. Reports indicate that Carolina Wren was truly decimated in the Region this past winter; only one breeding pair reported: Brighton Aug (MW); and one probable migrant: Maplewood Park June 8 (NM). Short-billed Marsh Wren: two Chili June 1-23, July 7 (Jsk, mob), was also very scarce. Mockingbird fared similarly to Carolina Wren. Indicative of a breeding population in an expected location was Hermit Thrush: three Honeoye Lake June 10 (RBA); and one east of Honeoye Lake June 18 (RM). A late Water Pipit passed: Charlotte June 7 (RS); and an early flock returned: 23 Greece July 31 (MP). Finally, breeding of Loggerhead Shrike was again

confirmed with a family group of one to three Carlton July 19-Aug. 6 (FD, mob).

**VIREOS-WARBLERS:** A very high count of Red-eyed Vireo was: 93 LP June 7 (JCI, JSk). Among the many warblers reported from the higher elevations of the Region in June, most interesting were: Blue-winged Warbler: 25 LP June 3 (TT); 31 LP June 7 (JCI, JSk); and an incredible 72 LP June 30 (RC, WS); and N. Parula: one LP June (mob). Suggestive of a return to breeding in the Region were **PRAIRIE WARBLER:** two singing males Honeoye Lake June 18 (RS); one Mendon Ponds Park June 19-20 (SaT); and one LP June 23 (W & HK). A Yellow-breasted Chat pair was frequently monitored: Greece June 27-Aug. 23. There were no early fall warbler migration dates of particular interest.

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** Orchard Orioles were, as usual for the last few years: one to four PB June-Aug. 3; plus a singing male Webster July 1 (CP). A very rare summer record was **EVENING GROSBEAK:** one Ellison Park July 12-13 (J & GD), a female visiting a feeder. House Finch has reached the stage where few observers go out of their way to find or report it. The usual colonies were reported, but only for June. Late, vagrant or breeding? Pine Siskin records were: to a max. of 11 Irondequoit June (ME); two BB June 30 (F & RD, RO); and one Webster July 25. The high count for Vesper Sparrow was: four Hamlin July 31. In the higher elevation part of the Region Dark-eyed Junco was reported: one Canadice Lake at 900' (270m) June 10 (RBA). Late migrant sparrows were represented by White-crowned Sparrow: one WL June 6 (KD, mob); and White-throated Sparrow: one Greece June 6 (KG).

716 High Tower Way, Webster, New York 14580

## REGION 3 - FINGER LAKES

W. E. BENNING

The summer was a bit on the cool side until mid-July when it turned hot and continued generally warm thru August. At Ithaca, August 1978 was the warmest August in five years. It was a generally dry and sunny summer with the rainfall coming in the early days of each month.

Probably the outstanding feature of a rather quiet season, ornithologically speaking, was the continued presence of three White Pelicans at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Southern herons visiting the Region were limited to a single Great Egret and an immature Glossy Ibis, both at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. Good numbers of Black-billed Cuckoos were reported. No reports of Carolina Wrens were received. Eastern Bluebirds appear to have slipped back again. House Finches continued to increase and spread. They are now a well established part of the avifauna of the entire Region.

The period closed with a huge flight of Common Nighthawks at Elmira on the evenings of August 27 and 28. Also at Elmira, there was an audible movement on the nights of August 30 and 31, with thrush notes heard on the 31st.

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, normally the principal shorebirding area in the Region, had only a limited amount of mudflats. About a dozen species used the area, all common except for the Long-billed Dowitcher and the

Wilson's Phalarope. Another dozen species, normally present but in small numbers, were not found this year. Elmira had little shorebirding, but Ithaca had some activity at the airport pond.

Rarities: White Pelican, Glossy Ibis, possible Sandhill Crane, Western Sandpiper, Forster's Tern, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Orchard Oriole and a probable Blue Grosbeak.

Abbreviations: Cay—Cayuga; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Sen—Seneca; \* (starred)—details on file.

Contributors and compilers: W. E. Benning, Jack Brubaker (Watkins Glen), Bernice Hilfiker, Wm. Koch (MNWR), Wilfrid Howard, Malcolm Lerch (Penn Yan), Dorothy McLroy (Ithaca), Steve Sabo, Jeffery Walters, Mary Welles (Elmira).

**LOONS—DUCKS:** **WHITE PELICAN:** as reported in the last issue of *The Kingbird*, three birds appeared at MNWR on May 7. They were seen sporadically all summer and were still around at the end of the period. Great Blue Heron: the Marengo Swamp colony had about 130 active nests. Great Egret: only report was one at MNWR Aug. 23. Black-crowned Night Heron: Elmira had but a single sighting this year on Aug. 17. Nested at MNWR as usual. **GLOSSY IBIS:** an immature at MNWR Jul. 28 (WB) and Aug. 25 (G & M Shepherd).

Ducks: the maximum counts reported by the MNWR personnel are as follows:

Mallard	4,000 Aug. 31	Blue-winged Teal	700 Aug. 31
Black	350 Jun. 30	Am. Wigeon	75 Aug. 31
Gadwall	500 Aug. 31	N. Shoveler	150 Aug. 31
Pintail	50 Aug. 31	Wood Duck	1,100 Aug. 31
Green-winged Teal	500 Aug. 31	Hooded Merganser	50 Aug. 31

Common Goldeneye: one Sen L Aug. 9. Lesser Scaup: Cay L Jul. 3. Hooded Merganser: six females with 15-20 young on a small pond at Elmira. Common Merganser: one Sen L Aug. 3. Red-breasted Merganser: one Sen L Aug. 3.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Goshawk: two young fledged from a nest south of Brooktondale (DM). Red-shouldered Hawk: nest located in Cay Co (J. Spencer). Marsh Hawk: reported from Geneva, Cohocton and MNWR. Osprey: singles at MNWR Jun. 8 and 13 and last half of Aug.; one at Elmira Aug. 29. Ring-necked Pheasant: Lerch called them normal in Yates Co. but in much of the Region they were considered scarce or very scarce. Turkey: a nest at Crosby, Yates Co. was broken up. **SANDHILL CRANE:** beginning with a report of bird at MNWR on Apr. 22 (D. Strayer & J. Bondue) there have been a series of unconfirmed sightings of this species mostly at MNWR. W. Koch gave a good report of one flying there on Jun. 10. The latest report is of a sighting at Hopewell in Ontario Co. on Aug. 7 by Charles Crouse. In view of the unconfirmed nature of these reports, the record must be labeled as a possible sighting. Shorebirds: unless otherwise noted all records are from MNWR. Semipalmated Plover: one Jun. 3; one Tompkins Co. Airport Aug. 2. Upland Sandpiper: reported from Elmira, Second Milo, Yates Co. and Tompkins Co. Fairground; two young raised at Etna. Solitary Sandpiper: reported from three areas in Tompkins Co. including a partial albino at Monkey Run. Greater Yellowlegs: one Jun. 8 and one to five Jul.-Aug. Lesser Yellowlegs: one Jun. 15; up to 64 Jul.-Aug. Pectoral Sandpiper: one to five Jul.-Aug.; three Tompkins Co. Airport Aug. 2. Least Sandpiper: max 21 Jul. 15; two Tompkins Co. Airport Aug. 2. Short-billed Dowitcher: 17 max Aug. 8. Long-billed Dowitcher: three Aug. 14 max. 12 Aug. 31. Formerly this species did not appear until Sept. but in the past three years they have been found by mid-Aug. Stilt Sandpiper: 20 max on Jul. 27 was a higher number than usual for Jul. Many were in breeding plumage. **WESTERN SANDPIPER:** three Tompkins Co. Airport Aug. 2 (W. Howe)\*. Wilson's Phalarope: one Aug. 5 and 20. **FORSTER'S TERN:** one MNWR Jul. 25 (S. Sabo). Caspian Tern: three Cay L Aug. 7; three MNWR Aug. 12.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Ringed Turtle Dove: one fed with Mourning Doves in a yard at Jacksonville Jul. 11-18. This was no doubt an escaped bird but it made an interesting change in the local avifauna. Black-billed Cuckoo: several widely separated reports during the summer. Long-eared Owl: this seldom-reported species was found in a pine plantation on Niemi Rd. near Tompkins Co. Airport on Jul. 1 and remained there about three weeks (W. Dilger). Whip-poor-will: one calling at Elmira Jun. 6-13 (T. Bates). Com. Night-hawk: "hundreds" migrating at Elmira on the evenings of Aug. 27 and 28. The air was "filled with them east of the city all the way to Rte. 17 and north to Horseheads." Belted Kingfisher: increased numbers around Cohocton. Red-headed Woodpecker: numerous reports along the northern edge of the Region. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: a pair at Ellis Hollow Jul. 12 where they have nested previously.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER:** two at Penn Yan Jul. 29, one Aug. 12 and one Aug. 30 (ML). **OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER:** one Elmira Jun. 4 (R. Knapp). Swallows: Tree and Bank Swallows generally reported down with Rough-wingeds scarce and Cliff Swallows very scarce. Barn Swallows doing well except at Cohocton where they too are reported down. Purple Martin: had reasonably good breeding success at MNWR; no reports from other contributors; on Aug. 21 near Tyre 1300 birds were counted on telephone wires. Carolina Wren: no reports: Two successive "killer" winters have played havoc with this species. Mockingbird: a nest was found at Varick Jul. 16. Hermit Thrush: one at Penn Yan Aug. 17. Swainson's Thrush: one at Penn Yan Jul. 24. Eastern Bluebird: this scarce species seems even more scarce altho 12 were seen at Elmira Aug. 31. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: widely reported thru the period; adult and young noted at MNWR Aug. 5. Water Pipit: one found on the Orleans Breeding Bird Census Jun. 10 late (R. Spahn).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Yellow-throated Vireo: more than the usual number of reports especially from the northern part of the Region. Philadelphia Vireo: one Penn Yan Aug. 17 early (ML). Warblers: Black-and-white: one singing Elmira Jul. 4. Golden-winged: feeding young at Elmira. Blue-winged: Phelps Jun. 11; Penn Yan Aug. 6, 19, 20; Etna Aug. 9. "Brewster's" hybrid: two Elmira Jul. 16 (D. Clements). Tennessee: Penn Yan Jul. 16. Nashville: Penn Yan Jul. 25. Yellow: abundant. Magnolia: Penn Yan Aug. 20. Black-throated Blue: Penn Yan Aug. 21. Yellow-rumped: Penn Yan Aug. 10 early. Black-throated Green: Cohocton. Cerulean: Phelps Jun. 11 and Jul. 16; Ellis Hollow Jun. 29. Blackburnian: one Orleans Breeding Bird Census Jun. 10; one Phelps Jun. 11; one Ithaca Jul. 11. Chestnut-sided: Penn Yan Aug. 20. Blackpoll: one Orleans Breeding Bird Census Jun. 10. Prairie: Connecticut Hill Jun. 1; singing birds at a new location on Town Line Rd. south of Ithaca; colony of about 10 birds near Montour Falls. Ovenbird: Penn Yan Aug. 17. Northern Waterthrush: Penn Yan Aug. 13. Louisiana Waterthrush: young able to fly were being fed on a porch in Elmira; Penn Yan Jul. 19. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Cay Heights Jul. 6 and 9; one Reading Center thru the period. Wilson's: one Town of Varick, Sen. Co. Aug. 22. Canada: Penn Yan Jul. 20; Town of Varick Aug. 13; MNWR Aug. 31. The above warbler records from Penn Yan are the first dates on which the species was netted and banded by Malcolm Lerch.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS: ORCHARD ORIOLE:** immature male singing Town of Varick Jun. 4. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: widely reported. **BLUE GROSBEAK:** a probable male at Freeville. A good description given but otherwise unconfirmed (Lynn Bradt)\*. Indigo Bunting: numerous and widespread reports. Purple Finch: pair at Oaks Corners Jun. 18; reported from Clifton Springs and Cohocton. Pine Siskin: one at feeder at Clyde Aug. 6-9. A summer lingerer or an early fall visitor? White-winged Crossbill: female and singing male along Six Mile Creek, Ithaca Jul. 8 (SS). Vesper Sparrow: continues very scarce. Dark-eyed Junco: nested in the Guyanoga gullies Yates Co.; reported from Cohocton. White-throated Sparrow: singing in the Mt. Zoar area, Elmira, where they have nested.

R.D. 2, Clyde, New York 14433

## REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

There was nothing remarkable about the weather for the summer period. Precipitation was a little on the high side and well distributed throughout the period so there was never a serious threat of drought. June temperatures were a little on the low side and July's a little on the high side but the most pronounced heat wave lasted about a week in mid-August.

As usual a large portion of the bird data collected for the season came from the Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) routes run in the Region, even though the results of only seven of the thirteen were available in time. Those seven produced 5339 individuals of 96 species, compared to 5943 individuals of 94 species on the same seven survey routes last year, a decrease of 10.2 per cent in individuals. The same comparison on a species-by-species basis, but only considering species with counts of 30 or more at least one of the two years, shows seven species decreasing and five species increasing by a third or more. The losers (and percent loss) were Common Flicker (58), Common Grackle (45), Chimney Swift (43), Am. Goldfinch (38), Veery (37), Starling (35) and Black-capped Chickadee (33). Gainers (and percent gain) were Cedar Waxwing (75), Killdeer (50), Cardinal (40), Chestnut-sided Warbler (38) and Northern Oriole (36). Such numbers must, of course, be examined critically before one even considers coming to any conclusions. Starlings and grackles may only be on the list because of earlier dates, before post-breeding flocking had progressed as far as the previous year. We expect erratic fluctuations in waxwing numbers, but Killdeer, swifts and chickadees were all in the opposite list last year, suggesting that their populations, but more probably our measurement of their populations, are also erratic.

The breeding bird survey information does tend to concentrate our attention on the early part of the summer season but a Swainson's Thrush, Tennessee Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, *etc.* in mid-August are at least a hint of the beginning of the fall migration.

We are still losing our grassland sparrows. Of the group only Savannah Sparrows remain in any numbers at all. Summer resident Hermit Thrushes were also down, but hopefully only temporarily. On the plus side the increasing number of summer Yellow-rumped Warblers is seemingly an established and welcome trend. There are precedents, although not many for the mid-June Swainson's Thrush. But the mid-June Northern Parula was more of a surprise, and, along with a Clay-colored Sparrow and a Northern Phalarope counts as a rarity for this Region.

The totals for each species recorded on one or more of the seven breeding bird surveys on hand at this writing are reported below in the form "(8,5)", to be read "8 individuals on 5 surveys." The surveys included are: Oxford, June 4, Harriet Marsi; Vestal Center, June 8, Elva Hawken; E. Newark, June 11, Elva Hawken; McDonough, June 17, Claude Howard; Coventryville, June 18, Leslie Bemont; Whitney Point, June 18, Robert Pantle; Lisle, June 24, Robert Pantle.

Other contributing observers: Cutler and Jeanette Baldwin; Reynolds Bennett; Mildred Clark; Anna and Marilyn Davis (A, MD); Mary Dobinsky (MD); Sadie Dorber; Evelyn and Bud Mead (E, BM); Mary Sheffield (MS); Robert Sheffield (RS); Donald Weber (DW); Cora Wellman (CW); Ruth and Sally White (R, SW); Kathryn Wilson (KW).

Abbreviations used: Port—Portlandville; Mil—Milford.

**LOONS—DUCKS:** Great Blue Heron: (4,3); the usual scattered reports of one to four birds but no colony checks. Green Heron: only a half dozen reports, apparently down in numbers. Mallard: (2,2); 38 Aug. 19 and 29 Aug. 21 in two Oneonta area localities. Black Duck: four Oneonta area Aug. 3 and a mention from Owego; no others. Wood Duck: 15 Port Aug. 3, the best count, but fairly numerous reports of small flocks in Jul. and Aug.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: almost all the reports received were from Delaware and Otsego Cos. Sharp-shinned Hawk: only two reports. Cooper's Hawk: only one report. Red-tailed Hawk: (5,3). Red-shouldered Hawk: (1,1) Oxford BBS; one Mil-Port Jun. 10. Broad-winged Hawk: (2,1); 14 other reports. Bald Eagle: one Choconut Center Jun. 10, immature (MS, RS)—marked with reddish streak across wings, apparently at Montezuma Wildlife Refuge. Marsh Hawk: one Mil-Port Jun. 10, the only one. Osprey: Aug. 23 Emmons, near Oneonta, the first fall migrant; two others before month end. American Kestrel: (13,6). Ruffed Grouse: (2,1). Ring-necked Pheasant: (2,2); only three other reports. Turkey: (1,1). Oxford BBS. Killdeer: (48,6). Common Snipe: one Sherburne Jul. 21 and one South Otselic Aug. 6 (R, SW). Spotted Sandpiper: (4,4); one Mil-Port Jul. 29, walking on lily pads; comparatively scarce. Solitary Sandpiper: three South Otselic Aug. 6. Greater Yellowlegs: three South Otselic Aug. 6. Lesser Yellowlegs: one South Otselic July 30. Pectoral Sandpiper: four South Otselic Aug. 6 (R, SW). Least Sandpiper: one South Otselic Aug. 6. Semipalmated Sandpiper: two South Otselic Aug. 6. **NORTHERN PHALAROPE:** one Candor Aug. 31 and again Sept. 1 (DW, E, BM), rarely reported in Region. Herring Gull: Aug. 4 Chenango Forks (A, MD), rarely recorded in the summer here.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Rock Dove: (59,6). Mourning Dove: (67,7). Yellow-billed Cuckoo: (2,1); heard regularly at Chenango Forks until Jun. 17 but only two other reports. Black-billed Cuckoo: (4,3); also Jun. 1 at Choconut Center and two reports from Owego. Screech Owl: none at all, spring or summer. Horned Owl: three reports, all from Binghamton area; down considerably. Whip-poor-will: Jun. 3 Choconut Center (MS), calling from the patio right outside a window; the only one so far this year. Chimney Swift: (28,5). Ruby-throated Hummingbird: (1,1); quite a few other reports. Belted Kingfisher: (3,2). Common Flicker: (20,7). Pileated Woodpecker: (3,3); five other reports. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Sherburne Jul. 1 (R, SW); also an undated report from Owego. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (3,3); Aug. 21 and 23 Mil-Port, the only other summer reports. Hairy Woodpecker: (1,1). Downy Woodpecker: (4,4).

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** Eastern Kingbird: (22,7); common along rural roads all season. Great Crested Flycatcher: (24,6); Eastern Phoebe: (37,7). Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal; three Crumhorn, e. of Oneonta, Aug. 21. Willow Flycatcher: (7,4). Alder Flycatcher: (5,1) McDonough BBS. Least Flycatcher: (38,7). Eastern Wood Pewee: (22,6). Horned Lark: (1,1). Tree Swallow: (54,7). Bank Swallow: (12,1). Rough-winged Swallow: (1,1); only one other report, undated from Owego. Barn Swallow: (165,7). Cliff Swallow: Jun. 17 Port, no others. Blue Jay: (94,7); 39 Mil-Port Aug. 21, 19 at one stop. Common Crow: (234,7). Black-capped Chickadee: (44,7). Tufted Titmouse: (4,2); also reported from Chenango Forks and Choconut Center. White-breasted Nuthatch: (2,2). Red-breasted Nuthatch: two Sherburne Jul. 1; Jul. 2 Newark Valley; four and eight Mil-Port Jul. 29 and Aug. 3 respectively. Brown Creeper: (1,1) Oxford BBS; Jul. 2 Newark Valley; two Mil-Port Jul. 29. House Wren: (85,7). Winter Wren: two Mil-Port Aug. 3. Long-billed Marsh Wren: one Port Jul. 7 and again Jul. 18; no reports from Norwich-Sherburne area because of Conrail competition for access path. Short-billed Marsh Wren: two South Edmon-

ston, in Chenango Co., Aug. 3 (R, SW). Mockingbird: (1,1) E. Newark BBS; also at Endwell and Union Center in Jul. Gray Catbird: (95,7). Brown Thrasher: (26,5). Robin: (355,7). Wood Thrush: (102,7). Hermit Thrush: Jul. 2 Newark Valley; Mil-Port Jul. 18 and 29; also at Owego. Swainson's Thrush: one Pharsalia Jun. 16 (R, SW); one banded Aug. 20 Vestal. Veery: (43,7). Eastern Bluebird: (9,3); seven near Oneonta Aug. 19. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: at Chenango Forks to at least Aug. 29 (A, MD). Golden-crowned Kinglet: two Pharsalia Jun. 16 (R, SW). Ruby-crowned Kinglet: five fall migrants Crumhorn, near Oneonta, Aug. 21. Cedar Waxwing: (70,5); small flocks all period. Starling: (450,7).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Yellow-throated Vireo: (10,5); daily at Chenango Forks until Aug. 25. Solitary Vireo: Coventryville BBS; reported in ones and twos all summer from Oneonta area, Newark Valley and Choconut Center; seven Port-Mil Aug. 21 possibly migrants. Red-eyed Vireo: (107,7); one feeding a young cowbird Aug. 12 Emmons. Warbling Vireo: (8,4). Black-and-white Warbler: (4,2); seven Port-Mil Aug. 23. Golden-winged Warbler: (2,1); several other Jun. reports then none until Aug. 19 Chenango Forks. Blue-winged Warbler: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal, the first after several Jun. reports. Tennessee Warbler: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal; four Mil-Port Aug. 21 and two in approximately the same area Aug. 23. Nashville Warbler: (6,3). **NORTHERN PARULA:** one Crumhorn sawmill Jun. 17 (MD, CW, KW), "listened to him for some time but couldn't find him." Yellow Warbler: (156,7); six Mil-Port Aug. 10, the last ones reported within the period. Magnolia Warbler: (4,2); five reports, to Aug. 23, from Mil-Port-Oneonta area. Cape May Warbler: one Mil-Port Aug. 21, no others. Black-throated Blue Warbler: (1,1) Lisle BBS; no Jul. reports, then six reported Aug. 19 to 23 in Mil-Port-Oneonta area. Yellow-rumped Warbler: (1,1) Coventryville BBS; one other Jun. report, four Jul. reports and five Aug. reports—six Mil-Port Aug. 21 max; summer reports in the Region were almost non-existent 20 years ago, but the frequency has been gradually creeping up in recent years. Black-throated Green Warbler: (8,2); small numbers all summer, as usual; 15 Mil-Port Aug. 21. Blackburnian Warbler: (1,1) McDonough BBS; three Pharsalia Jun. 16; also reported from Newark Valley and Mil-Port. Chestnut-sided Warbler: (36,7); 20 Mil-Port Aug. 21. Bay-breasted Warbler: two Emmons Aug. 19, first ones since May; other reports Aug. 21 and 23. Prairie Warbler: Jun. 11, 17 and 25 Choconut Center. Ovenbird: (43,6). Northern Waterthrush: (5,3). Louisiana Waterthrush: Jun. 10 Mil-Port; Jun. 14 Apalachin. Mourning Warbler: (2,1) McDonough BBS; Jun. 10 and Aug. 21 Port-Mil. Yellowthroat: (216,7). Yellow-breasted Chat: still at Choconut Center Jun. 6, 18 and 24 and singing vigorously. Wilson's Warbler: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal. Canada Warbler: (2,2); one other early Jun. report then none until Jul. 29 Port-Mil. American Redstart: (18,4).

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS:** House Sparrow: (206,6). Bobolink: (126,7); Choconut Center Aug. 27. Eastern Meadowlark: (55,7). Red-winged Blackbird: (840,7). Northern Oriole: (104,7). Common Grackle: (182,7); Brown-headed Cowbird: (41,7). Scarlet Tanager: (32,7). Cardinal: (63,6). Rose-breasted Grosbeak: (33,7). Indigo Bunting: (48,7). Purple Finch: (12,5). House Finch: (2,1) E. Newark BBS; Jun. 19 Oneonta, "on clothesline pulling frayed end of line"; also at Endwell, Choconut Center and Owego. Am. Goldfinch: (67,7). Rufous-sided Towhee: (46,7). Savannah Sparrow: (38,7). Grasshopper Sparrow: (1,1) Lisle BBS; Jun. 11 and 18, two different places in Castle Creek area (MS); one undated Owego report; no others. Henslow's Sparrow: (1,1) Coventryville BBS; that's all. Vesper Sparrow: one Port-Mil Jun. 10; Aug. 26 at Cole Park in Broome Co.; two undated Owego area records; no others. Dark-eyed Junco: (5,2); seven reports of up to seven birds throughout the period from Port-Mil, Pharsalia and Newark Valley. Chipping Sparrow: (125,7). **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** (1,1) Oxford BBS. Field Sparrow: (70,7). White-throated Sparrow: (13,4); six Pharsalia Jun. 16; six reports throughout period from Port-Mil, four max Jun. 10. Swamp Sparrow: (12,4). Song Sparrow: (302,7).

710 University Ave., Endwell, New York 13760

## REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

FRITZ SCHEIDER

Finally, a decent summer! After three long, cold, wet summers, central New York received some sunshine and warmth and the heliophilic anthropoids loved it. June and July were both warm and dry with splendid conditions for the locally breeding passerines, particularly swallows and Cedar Waxwings. The first half of August continued the pleasant weather although a few rainy days helped the local gardeners. Late August saw some chilly, days and cloudy cool weather in the last week pushed out many of the previously numerous swallows. The earlier dry weather helped to produce the best shorebird habitat conditions in three years.

Local farm practice changes are having a profound effect on the breeding species that are farmland dependent. The corn monoculture advancing inexorably thru the area supports only Canada Geese on migration and icterids during the summer. The continued abandonment of many farms, particularly dairy farms, sharply reduces the available habitat for the grassland sparrows and Horned Larks, and the loss of the outbuildings associated with dairy farming may eventually compromise the populations of Barn and Cliff Swallows utilizing them. On the plus side, some new and extensive bean crops and winter wheat plantings may produce respite, at least for the dirt-loving Vesper Sparrow. Another change in local habitat use comes from the extensive firewood cutting now being practiced in the wooded country of the Tug Hill Plateau and in the southern highlands. The roadside cuttings and the side roads developed for the removal of firewood have created superb conditions for breeding Winter Wrens and will subsequently provide the plant succession that will allow increases in the various brush-to-second-growth warblers (Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Mourning, and Hooded Warblers and American Redstart). Still another feature of habitat change noted this summer comes from the spread of the beaver into lower elevations, even into the Ontario lake plain creeks. The wooded margins of the various beaver ponds have been quickly populated by woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatchers, and Tree Swallows after the second year of tree-kill by flooding.

Local seed and berry production seemed to be very heavy this summer and the local evergreen cone crop, especially spruce, can only be described as magnificent.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Surveys were accomplished this season at Alder Creek (June 12), Cicero Center (June 4), Clinton (June 7), Kasoag (June 10), McKeever (June 15), North Victory (June 21), North Wilmurt (June 14), Old Forge (June 19), Oneida (June 18), Oriskany Falls (July 1), and Pulaski (June 1).

Positives for the summer include 1) expanding populations of Canada Geese; 2) good brood production of Mallard and Blue-winged Teal; 3) a hint of success in Red-shouldered Hawk nesting; 4) good variety, albeit poor numbers, in shorebirds; 5) some improvement in Common Nighthawk numbers; 6) good counts of



Eastern Kingbirds, Bobolinks, and Northern Orioles, primarily from the Ontario lake plain; 7) excellent tallies of some species of swallows in August; 8) a glut of waxwings; 9) increases in Warbling Vireos and Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers; and 10) further rapid expansion in House Finch.

Negatives for the season are 1) few white herons and very few Least Bitterns; 2) continued decline in Ring-necked Pheasant; 3) a paucity of rails; 4) further decline in Black Tern; 5) a sharp drop in breeding Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers; 6) marked reduction in both Eastern Phoebes and Least Flycatchers; 7) a drop in virtually all wren species, Hermit Thrushes, and in Golden-crowned Kinglets, all intracontinentally wintering species; 8) decreases in many of the locally breeding warblers, most moderate, but in a few severe; 9) further decline in the grassland sparrows and perhaps also in Field Sparrows.

Also note the plethora of very early fall migrants (*cf* shorebirds, Swainson's Thrush, warblers, and White-throated Sparrow).

Estival rarities include Little Blue Heron, Whimbrel, Wilson's and Northern Phalaropes, Forster's Tern, Lawrence's Warbler, and Painted Bunting, the last being a first for the region.

Observers: D. W. Ackley, L. Chamberlaine, G. Church, K. M. Coyle, D. W. Crumb, B. and D. DeSimone, D. Emord, G. Huggins, F. LaFrance, R. E. Long, P. and S. Paquette, M., B., and S. Peebles, M. S. Rusk, S. Sabo, F. G. Scheider, G. A. Smith, C. G. Spies, and J. and E. Van Dresar.

Abbreviations: BBS—U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Surveys; HIGMA—Howlands Island Game Management Area near Port Byron; L—lake; Onon—Onondaga; SP—Sandy Pond; THP—Tug Hill Plateau, Oswego and Oneida Co. portions thereof.

LOONS—DUCKS: Pied-billed Grebe: breeding pairs at HIGMA, Utica Marsh, and Fair Haven Beach State Park; unreported from the major marshes (Scott Swamp, Clay Marsh) of the region. Great Egret: single birds at Rice Creek Aug. 14-23, N. Syracuse Aug. 14-15, and DeWitt Aug. 22; no other white herons reported. LITTLE BLUE HERON: adult Jun. 18 Rice Creek Biological Field Station (G. Maxwell), only the fourth adult reported for the Region. Least Bittern: reported only from the Utica Marsh and the marshes at the south end of Sandy Pond—like the Pied-billed Grebe, absent from the major marshes of the Region. Canada Goose: 200 plus at HIGMA Aug. 26; small populations (20+) have developed at Scott Swamp and at Pond Hundred near Fair Haven. Mallard: abundant production locally—118 Jul. 26 Onon L. Blue-winged Teal: like Mallard, good production this summer—82 Aug. 13 Pools Brook and Sylvan Beach. Wood Duck: many broods noted but brood size a bit low; counts of 20-35/day in late August. For the first time in years, no summering diving ducks for the entire Region—?hard weather, motor boats, no food? Migrant dabbling ducks showed up amazingly early—single Pintail Jul. 12, Gadwall Jul. 29, and American Wigeon Aug. 23, all at Onon L.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Red-shouldered Hawk: one definite nesting with young in Oswego County and four sightings of other birds suggestive of possible nesting there—slightly encouraging. Marsh Hawk: adult male Aug. 13 at Mexico Point, a remarkably early date for a bird in that plumage. Ring-necked Pheasant: continues very scarce—max six Jun. 4 Cicero Center BBS. Virginia Rail: extraordinarily scarce thru entire summer—reported from DeWitt Marsh, Utica Marsh, and along L Ontario but the major marshes seemed devoid of them. Sora: like Virginia Rail, only worse. American Coot: again breeding at Utica Marsh (three pairs) this summer. Shorebirds arrived remarkably early but numbers were consistently low, this despite the best local shorebird conditions in the past three years. Fall arrivals,

many remarkably early, are Semipalmated Plover Jul. 9 one Onon L, Black-bellied Plover Jul. 1 two Onon L, Common Snipe Jul. 2 one Amboy Pool near Lakeland, Solitary Sandpiper Jul. 1 one Amboy Pool, Greater Yellowlegs Jul. 11 one Amboy Pool, Lesser Yellowlegs Jun. 20 two Amboy Pool, Pectoral Sandpiper Jul. 20 one Onon L, Least Sandpiper Jun. 23 one Onon L (record early), Dunlin Jul. 24 (amazing!) one Sylvan Beach, Short-billed Dowitcher Jul. 8 three SP, Semipalmated Sandpiper Jul. 12 two Sylvan Beach, and Sanderling Jul. 16 one SP. The better maxima included Black-bellied Plover 22 Aug. 6 SP, Lesser Yellowlegs 158 Aug. 3 DeWitt Marsh, Least Sandpiper 65 Aug. 27 Onon L, and Semipalmated Sandpiper 202 Jul. 30 Sylvan Beach. Particularly scarce were Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Sanderling. Rare shorebirds for the period include **WHIMBREL** two Aug. 17 Derby Hill, **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** four different individuals Onon L various dates Jul. 24 to Aug. 31, and **NORTHERN PHALAROPE** Aug. 27 two Onon L. Great Black-backed Gull: three to five birds persistent thru summer at SP Inlet—when and where will the first nesting be? Bonaparte's Gull: 14-46/day at SP Aug. 1-31, above average numbers for Aug. **FORSTER'S TERN**: two July 8 (early) SP Inlet with max. four there Aug. 31. Black Tern: continued decline—small colonies at SP, Deer Creek Marsh, and the estuary of the Salmon River; N. Syracuse marshes hosted a single pair this summer.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS**: Mourning Dove: benefiting from the local farming practices—the corn monoculture sustains many birds thru the winter, the early June and July bean fields provide abundant feeding during the nesting season, and the young gather and thrive at the fields plowed and harrowed in preparation for the planting of winter wheat. Common Nighthawk: 12 pairs in Syracuse (R. E. Long), up slightly from the dismal numbers of last year; largest migrant group reported is 12 at Utica Aug. 11. Red-bellied Woodpecker: pair at Toad Harbor near West Monroe Jun. 10 is the first indication of eastward extension along the north shore of Oneida L. although the bird has nearly completely colonized the south shore already. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: down on virtually all BBS where it is regular—most dramatic drop on Old Forge BBS with 22 in 1977, only six in 1978; probably hard hit by two rough winters in a row.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS**: Eastern Kingbird: up on eight of 11 BBS; in some cases numbers have doubled. Eastern Phoebe: lowest ever or missed on eight of 11 BBS—another victim of those two back-to-back rough winters. Least Flycatcher: down on ten of 11 BBS with the most impressive drops in the Alder Creek, Oneida, and N. Wilmurt BBS—perhaps a victim of the very cold spring just past. Swallows—most BBS show some diminution in breeding swallows, most marked in Tree and Bank Swallows on the Ontario lake plain and in Cliff Swallows in the western Adirondacks and the high country just west of that sector. However, local Aug. counts of some swallows suggested that production of young was very good and in some cases most have been outstanding, thus—1800 Tree Swallows Aug. 31 SP, 3500 Bank Swallows Aug. 13 SP, 20 Rough-winged Swallows Jul. 29 SP (this species is still in trouble), 30,000 Barn Swallows (a local record) Aug. 5 Clay Marsh, 12 Cliff Swallows (low) Aug. 27 Mexico and 75 Purple Martins (very low) Aug. 19 DH. Red-breasted Nuthatch: missed for the first time in eight years on the Old Forge BBS; very scarce in the THP also; first migrants Aug. 27 SP dunes. Winter Wren: still very low (one to ten/BBS) on the various Adirondack and THP tallies—another victim of the severe cold and deep snow of the last two winters; interesting are singing birds thru the summer at Camillus Valley and Pumpkin Hollow near Marcellus, both low elevation sites much favored by more southern species. Carolina Wren: virtually wiped out by the last two winters—only report is one in advanced molt Aug. 13 SP dunes. Long-billed Marsh Wren: severely reduced by the past two winters—max. six Scott Swamp Jul. 7 and six also Pools Brook near Kirkville Aug. 1; most observers saw none for the entire summer. Short-billed Marsh Wren: unreported for period. Mockingbird: singles on the Cicero Center and Oriskany Falls BBS; pair with four young in DeWitt; holding on a bit better than the Carolina Wren but not much. Gray Catbird and Brown Thrasher: BBS tallies for both up slightly or equal to last year's numbers, albeit last year's counts were somewhat reduced from previous years; one can say

they sustained no further decline and may be beginning to show evidence of minimal recovery. Hermit Thrush: down on five of six regularly tallied BBS; most striking is their absence from Old Forge, Oneida, and Pulaski BBS. Eastern Bluebird: still very low—none on any BBS; somewhat encouraging are 32 young fledged at Eaton; only three others reported. Swainson's Thrush: first migrant Jul. 29 (record early) one Colosse. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max ten HIGMA Jul. 12, high for summer. Golden-crowned Kinglet: miserable tallies—max. only six/day from THP and missed entirely on the Old Forge BBS. Cedar Waxwing: everywhere!—three-45/BBS and Aug. counts often 100 plus birds/day; attracted in numbers to the abundantly fruiting Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and Elderberry (*Sambucus sp.*).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Red-eyed Vireo: all time highs on Alder Creek and McKeever BBS; however, down slightly on the other nine tallies. Philadelphia Vireo: first fall arrival Jul. 30 one Little Sandy Creek (very early). Warbling Vireo: record numbers for Ontario lake plain tallies—16 Pulaski BBS, 18 Cicero Center BBS, eight North Victory BBS; however, down slightly on the counts from higher elevations. Breeding warblers as assessed by BBS—strongly increased species include Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers; moderately increased species Blackburnian and Canada Warblers; moderately decreased species include Black-and-white, Golden-winged, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped (“Myrtle”), and Mourning Warblers, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, and American Redstart; and strongly decreased species were Northern Parula and Black-throated Green Warblers. Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers seemed to have had a banner year in Oswego Co. with counts of 12-15 Golden-winged and three-four Blue-winged Warblers/day along L Ontario in early Aug.; also seven “Brewster’s” Warblers reported in Aug. and a superb male “LAWRENCE’S” WARBLER Jun. 27-29 in southern Onondaga Co. Southbound migrant warblers arrived incredibly early this fall, *sic*—Tennessee Warbler Jul. 12 Pompey, Nashville Warbler Jul. 29 SP dunes, Northern Parula Aug. 6 SP dunes, Yellow Warbler Jul. 10 N. Syracuse, Magnolia Warbler Aug. 13 SP dunes, Yellow-rumped (“Myrtle”) Warbler Aug. 19 SP dunes, Black-throated Green Warbler Jul. 29 SP dunes, Blackburnian Warbler Jul. 20 SP dunes, Chestnut-sided Warbler Jul. 29 SP dunes, Bay-breasted Warbler Jul. 29 Colosse, Ovenbird Aug. 6 SP dunes, Northern Waterthrush Jul. 16 SP dunes, Wilson’s Warbler Aug. 19 SP dunes, Canada Warbler Aug. 6 SP dunes, and American Redstart Jul. 21 SP dunes. The list of early dates covers an impressive number of species (*cf* Swainson’s Thrush and Philadelphia Vireo); whether this occurs every July and early August only future careful checking will determine.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS:** Bobolink: all time highs on Alder Creek, Cicero Center, and Pulaski BBS but down in highland counts; fall flocks include 115 Aug. 6 Mexico and 150 Aug. 20 Oneida Hawk Lookout. Northern (“Baltimore”) Oriole: up on six of ten BBS but in numbers only from the Ontario lake plain counts. Brown-headed Cowbird: numbers slightly down on seven of 11 BBS—Praise the Lord! Scarlet Tanager: tallies up on seven of 11 BBS; most encouraging is the recovery at Old Forge with just two in '76, nine in '77, and now 13 in '78. Cardinal: continues consolidation within its local range—more pairs noted on the north shore of Oneida L and in the L Ontario woodlots north to Sandy Pond. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: record tallies for Alder Creek, McKeever, North Victory, and Pulaski BBS with range of seven-21/BBS. **PAINTED BUNTING:** a female in mint condition netted, banded, and photographed Jun. 7 West Rd., Town of West Monroe, Oswego Co. (D. Emord) is a first regional record; photographs on file and details to NYSARC. House Finch: continues to expand—numbers in Syracuse impressive with 42 at a single feeder Aug. 15; spreading thru suburbia with breeding pairs now regular at North Syracuse and Camillus. Am. Goldfinch: numbers down somewhat on nine of 11 BBS; however, Aug. tallies suggest the species has rebounded superbly. Grassland sparrows continue to show ever lessening numbers; this reduction is probably a combination of lack of suitable breeding habitat locally, coupled with losses on the wintering grounds secondary to the past two harsh winters; totals for the period are Grasshopper Sparrow (14 individuals from seven sites), Henslow’s Sparrow (11 individuals from six sites) and Vesper Sparrow (14 individuals from eight sites);

most observers saw none of the three species for the summer. Field Sparrow: down on six of the ten BBS where regularly present; count numbers range from one-eight/BBS; is this species joining the grassland sparrows in the pattern of declining numbers or is it showing only temporary losses because of the recent severe winters? White-throated Sparrow: expanding in southeastern Oneida and southwestern Herkimer Co. outside the previously recognized and mapped areas for the Region; numbers in the THP, however, appeared slightly decreased (only six-12/day) this summer; one Jul. 29 SP dunes is a very early fall migrant but is in keeping with the numerous early migrant warblers of that same date.

114 Rockland Drive, North Syracuse, New York 13212

The Editors note with regret that Fritz Scheider is stepping down as the Editor of Region Five, this being the last issue to contain one of his regional reports. His careful and good-natured analyses of local conditions have been among the best this journal has received, and should serve as a model for future contributors to these pages. —Eds.

## REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

LEE B. CHAMBERLAINE

Summer of 1978 is best characterized as hot and very dry. Some portions of the Region suffered extreme drought with streams drying up completely and Lake Ontario dropping to very low levels. Temperatures ranged from 98° F (36° C) to 45° F (7° C) with some days where temperature differences in twenty-four hours was only 25° F from a high of 96° F. Rainfall for June was normal, July below normal and August normal. August's rain all came in the last week of the month. Although the high temperatures made birding a bit uncomfortable, the numbers and varieties around this summer made most trips afield well worthwhile.

Highlights for the period included some unusual observations of some most unusual species. Many new records were set and proof of breeding species established, during the period. For starters a White Pelican showed up at Wilson Hill on Aug. 9—probably one of the Montezuma birds? The St. Lawrence River provided a Red-necked Grebe summer record and the Galloo Island Double-crested Cormorant colony zoomed to 192 active nests, possibly at the expense of the Black-crowned Night Heron colony. Great Blue Herons on Ironsides Island did well with a total of 280 active nests. Cattle Egret breeding in the Region was proven with nests, eggs and young at Galloo Island—it had been expected by some due to previous summer records in the Ellisburg area.

Waterfowl made a fair showing with some interesting observations. The Black Duck is being "absorbed" by the Mallard along the St. Lawrence River. Our second most common breeder along the St. Lawrence River is now the Gadwall—a totally unknown species just a few short years ago. Wood Duck production was way up, even with the very dry conditions. A pair of Ruddy Ducks at Wilson Hill all summer was frustrating when no young could be found. Accipiters and

Red-shouldered Hawks remain in trouble. The increase in Bald Eagle sightings confounds the mind and there was some improvement in Marsh Hawk sightings. Gray Partridge still remain in low numbers and very little was heard from the D.E.C. Turkey releases on Fort Drum. Perhaps the next period will prove successful reproduction on the Turkey trap and transfer program in Jefferson County. Shorebirds were at their best with the very low lake levels on Lake Ontario. Some of the better sightings included a Whimbrel, Willet, and Short-billed Dowitcher all at El Dorado. Warblers made a fair showing with the highlight being the Golden-winged, Blue-winged, and "Brewster's" all at Dry Hill, with the "Brewster's" singing the song of a Blue-winged.

Contributors: Stu Brown; Lee Chamberlaine; Frank Clinch; Sal Cozzolino; Dorothy Crumb; Steve and Vici Diehl; Joe Lamendola; Pat Riexinger; Gerry Smith; Joe VanRiet; Bob and June Walker.

**LOONS-DUCKS:** Com. Loon: scattered pairs and singles in breeding and non-breeding plumage along the St. Lawrence R west of Morristown throughout the summer; no successful breeding noted although the presence of a minimum of ten pairs suggests it was attempted; two pairs between Coles Creek and Moses Power Dam; exact status of the river population is uncertain and should be investigated (Gerry Smith). **RED-NECKED GREBE** two in almost full breeding plumage near Hill Island Bridge in Ontario June 7 and one there on June 11—first summer record for St. Lawrence R—late migrants? (Smith). **Pied-billed Grebe:** very scarce—max one or two per day primarily from the marshes around Goose Bay and Chippewa Bay—St. Lawrence R. This species is in trouble throughout upstate (Smith). **WHITE PELICAN:** Wilson Hill Aug. 9 (Sal Cozzolino, mob); may be one of the Montezuma birds? **Double-crested Cormorant:** on Little Galloo Island 192 active nests June 25; in 1974 there were 22 nests—credible! Probably the only solvent cormorant colony between the Atlantic Coast and Lake Huron; one to three per day on the St. Lawrence R including at least two adults and two different immatures (Smith); two El Dorado Aug. 25. **Great Blue Heron:** 280 nests at Ironsides Island St. Lawrence R; an excellent nesting year. **Green Heron:** three to seven per day St. Lawrence R. **Cattle Egret:** Little Galloo Island May 28, five adults—two nests with adults incubating; June 25 three nests as follows: one with five eggs—unsuccessful; one empty nest with two young in quill feathers; new nest with two eggs; first known breeding in Region. May explain past occurrences of birds in Ellisburg area in previous summers. **Black-crowned Night Heron:** Little Galloo Island 77 nests—a decrease from last year's high of 121 nests; decline may be due to nest sites being destroyed by whitewash of cormorants and fallen nest trees (Smith). **Least Bittern:** one Upper and Lower Lakes Aug. 10 (Pat Riexinger). **Am. Bittern:** two per day in marshes of Goose Bay and Chippewa Bay St. Lawrence R. **Canada Goose:** scattered pairs on St. Lawrence R west of Wellesley Isl mainly breeding on small islands throughout; average two to six per day west of Coles Creek—15 to 25 per day eastward. **Brant:** small numbers two to ten per day along St. Lawrence R. till June 14 (Smith). **Mallard:** the most common breeding duck on St. Lawrence R.; probably not as successful inland due to the dry summer. **Black Duck:** has virtually disappeared as a breeder west of Waddington on St. Lawrence R.; in western sectors most sightings involve one per day at scattered intervals east of Coles Creek; a few breeders persist but many pairs in this area are mixed Mallard x Black—only one brood of "pure" Blacks was noted the entire season (Smith). **Gadwall:** the second most common breeding dabbler on the river and a frequent nesting species on small islands throughout the entire river; appears to breed on many of the same small islands as Mallards but with slightly different timing schedules. **Pintail:** six El Dorado Aug. 25. **Blue-winged Teal:** birds started moving south by mid-August due to cool temperatures. **Am. Wigeon:** four pairs Wilson Hill June 1; eight Wilson Hill June 13; seven Wilson Hill June 20. **Wood Duck:** excellent production this year. **Redhead:** 14 July 3. **Ring-necked:** one male Coles Creek Aug. 3. **Canvasback:** one male

July 3. Gr. Scaup: one immature. Wilson Hill June 20; flocks of ten to 20 in the vicinity of Black Ant Island St. Lawrence R. until early July. Lesser Scaup: four immatures Wilson Hill June 11; three immature same location June 13; one immature and two male adults Wilson Hill June 20; three to four with Greater's vicinity of Black Ant Isl. until early July. Com. Goldeneye: one Wilson Hill Aug. 3. Ruddy Duck: pair at Wilson Hill June 1 and 11; male at Coles Creek June 16; one male July 3—no young seen (Joe VanRiet). Red-breasted Merganser: scattered groups of one to three per day at various locations throughout St. Lawrence R. summering.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: many observations throughout the summer—a common sight in Jefferson Co. Sharp-shinned Hawk: no summer reports. Cooper's Hawk: no summer reports. Red-shouldered Hawk: no reports. **BALD EAGLE:** one immature Perch R June 22 (Mike Townsend) this was a wing-tagged bird and probably a Montezuma bird; one adult Fox Island Lake Ontario Aug. 15; one adult Lakeview Aug. 27 (Ivy Benzdykt); numerous other unverified reports. Marsh Hawk: one Smithville June 10; one Wilson Hill June 13; one Henderson July 23; one El Dorado Aug. 15 and 21; one French Creek Aug. 22; several pairs noted throughout the St. Lawrence R during the summer—only healthy breeding population in upstate New York. Osprey: many observations in Adirondack portions of Region; a few scattered sightings along eastern Lake Ontario shore and St. Lawrence R. Am. Kestrel: about normal numbers. Spruce Grouse: one male Grass R St. Lawrence Co. July 19 (Stu Brown). Ruffed Grouse: numbers are still above normal. Gray Partridge: one Three Mile Pt. June 4; only report. Turkey: one report all summer from Fort Drum releases. Semipalmated Plover: three El Dorado Aug. 2; 12 same, Aug. 15; six same Aug. 25. Black-bellied Plover: two Dexter Aug. 21. Ruddy Turnstone: one El Dorado July 7; 25 same Aug. 15; four same Aug. 25. Com. Snipe: two El Dorado Aug. 15. **WHIMBREL:** one El Dorado July 10 (Smith). Upland Sandpiper: none reported—this species is in trouble. **WILLET:** one El Dorado July 15 (Dorothy Crumb). Greater Yellowlegs: two El Dorado Aug. 21; one Ray's Bay Aug. 25. Lesser Yellowlegs: three El Dorado July 7; 100 same July 10; 12 same Aug. 15, eight same Aug. 25. Pectoral Sandpiper: four El Dorado Aug. 15. Least Sandpiper: three El Dorado Aug. 15; six same Aug. 21. Short-billed Dowitcher: one El Dorado July 7; six same Aug. 15; four same Aug. 20, six same Aug. 25. Semipalmated Sandpiper: 250 El Dorado Aug. 15; some color-dyed birds reported—data sent to Feds. Sanderling: ten El Dorado Aug. 15. Great Black-backed Gull: two Coles Creek June 19; one El Dorado Aug. 21. Herring Gull: 93 nests on Little Galloo Island; St. Lawrence R. reproductive success was terrible (Smith). Ring-billed Gull: 77,000 nests Little Galloo I. (Smith); tremendous numbers inland to feed on cut hay fields and plowed fields—seen in Lewis Co. and probably interchange between Black R. Valley occurs. Bonaparte's Gull: three El Dorado Aug. 21. **FORSTER'S TERN:** one immature El Dorado July 10 (Smith); one same location Aug. 15 (Crumb). Com. Tern: four July 7; six Aug. 15; three Aug. 21; seven Aug. 25 all El Dorado. Caspian Tern: 15 El Dorado Aug. 15; six same Aug. 21; 14 same Aug. 25. Black Tern: two El Dorado July 7; 16 same Aug. 15.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Mourning Dove: numbers about the same as last year. Black-billed Cuckoo: one Dry Hill June 16 and 24; one El Dorado July 7; one same Aug. 15; high caterpillar year. Great Horned Owl: thru period. Com. Nighthawk: 12+ Watertown Aug. 23—probably in migration—numbers are still low from a few years ago. Chimney Swift: not in previous numbers in the Henderson area. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: not in normal numbers in Henderson area—extreme drought? Red-headed Woodpecker: one Henderson July 9; one El Dorado Aug. 15; a little improvement from last year. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: brood seen June 19. Hairy Woodpecker: numbers in Henderson and vicinity way down. Downy Woodpecker: numbers in Henderson down.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** E. Kingbird: numbers about normal. Great Crested Flycatcher: about normal numbers. E. Phoebe: numbers still down but a little improvement. Alder Flycatcher: one Dry Hill June 15 and 16; one Wilson Hill June 20. Least Flycatcher:

four Coles Creek June 19 (Van Riet). E. Wood Pewee: about normal numbers. **OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER**: one El Dorado Aug. 15 (Crumb). Tree Swallow: in normal numbers. Bank Swallow: may be decreasing and bears watching. Barn Swallow—numbers still down in Henderson and vicinity. Cliff Swallow: 978 nests counted on three Massena area dams on July 1 (Van Riet); formerly a seldom-reported species. Purple Martin: in Henderson area numbers still down. Blue Jay: in Henderson area numbers are up. Black-capped Chickadee: not in normal numbers in Henderson and vicinity. White-breasted Nuthatch: numbers in Henderson down. Red-breasted Nuthatch: not in normal numbers. Brown Creeper: very few reported. House Wren: in normal numbers if not a little above normal. Carolina Wren: no reports. Long-billed Marsh Wren: about normal numbers. Mockingbird: none reported. Gray Catbird: thru period. Am. Robin: seems to be up in numbers in much of the Region. Hermit Thrush: one Coles Creek June 16. Veery: 22 Wilson Hill June 13; 14 Coles Creek June 16; 57 Coles Creek June 19. Cedar Waxwing: not as common as last year—smaller flocks. Loggerhead Shrike: no reports—this species has just about disappeared from the Region.

**VIREOS—WARBLERS**: Black-and-white Warbler: two June 3; one June 19. Blue-winged Warbler: one Dry Hill June 24 (Walkers). Golden-winged Warbler: one Dry Hill June 15 (Walker). **"BREWSTER'S" WARBLER**: one singing Blue-winged song Dry Hill June 3 (Walkers). Nashville Warbler: two Coles Creek June 19; one Wilson Hill July 4 (Van Riet). Yellow Warbler: 30 Coles Creek June 19. Yellow-rumped Warbler: three July 4. **PINE WARBLER**: one Coles Creek June 19 (Van Riet); seldom reported in Region. Mourning Warbler: one Wilson Hill June 11. Common Yellowthroat: 16 Coles Creek June 19.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS**: Bobolink: started southward migration before end of period. E. Meadowlark: may be a slight increase from previous numbers. Common Grackle: very high reproductive success in Henderson area; one young "silver" in color seen at feeder in July. Brown-headed Cowbird: numbers in Henderson area are way down from last year. Cardinal: none in the Henderson area; Watertown city population about normal. Evening Grosbeak: bird banded April 17, 1976 in Watertown captured and released on Feb. 3, 1978 at Natchitoches, Louisiana—first known bird to go that far southwest; bird banded at Jay, Oklahoma, retrapped Watertown; the first Oklahoma banded Evening Grosbeak to be recovered anywhere (Clinch). Purple Finch: a few all summer. **HOUSE FINCH**: pair at feeder all summer—by early July their young came with them—first evidence of breeding in Watertown (Clinch). Savannah Sparrow: still in trouble. Vesper Sparrow: none reported—another species that has problems. Chipping Sparrow: seemed more common than two previous years. White-throated Sparrow: found breeding on Stony Point next to Lake Ontario—usually found at higher elevations such as peripheral Tug Hill and east of I-81. Swamp Sparrow: nine Coles Creek June 19.

Box 139, Henderson, New York 13650

## REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE D. MACK

This summer season was unusual in that it was drier, with about 40 days of temperatures over 80° F. Some years there are only one or two hot days. Lake Champlain may have some nice shorebird flats exposed for fall.

There were a lot of tent caterpillars and a consequent wide reporting of Black-billed Cuckoos with a few Yellow-billed reported from the Champlain Valley. Cedar Waxwings were everywhere. They were the most common inland bird at times, usurping that title from the Red-eyed Vireo.

A first documented report of a bird from the state, plus a first state nesting record for another species lent excitement to the season.

Contributors: L and R Brousseau; Geoffrey Carleton; Charlcie Delehanty; Beth Edmonds; Betty Hedges; Alice Jones; Ferdinand LaFrance; Ted Mack; Dorothy McLroy; Bob and Margaret McKinney; Helen Manson; Gordon Meade; Dan Nickerson; John M. Peterson; Katherine Ray; Bill Rutherford; Fritz Scheider; Mary Yegella; Robert Yunick.

LOONS-DUCKS: Young Common Loons were raised on Upper St. Regis: two adults and two young were on Sand Lake near Piseco; two adults were at Bridge Brook Pond at Tupper. WESTERN GREBE: Charlcie Delehanty found one on Tupper July 2 and it stayed at least until Sept. 15th. Geoffrey Carleton, Gordon Meade, and several others had good viewings. Photographs were taken. The bird was obviously not a loon. It had a white neck and face with black cap, hind neck and body. This will make the first documented report for the state, and therefore remove the species from the hypothetical list. A pair of Mute Swans were mentioned as nesting on the Saranac River in Franklin County by the D.E.C. but there is no verification at the moment. Canada Geese nested at Tupper and a late Snow Goose was at Four Bros. in Lake Champlain on June 17. Black Ducks with large broods were seen. There were eight downy Ring-necked Ducks on Tupper July 15 and 15 on August 31. A female Common Goldeneye with 14 young was on Bear Pond July 9. Later only four young were seen (TM). Katherine Ray saw a Black Scoter on Lake Abanaki July 22 to the 24th. The wings showed all black when flapped and the yellow on bill was brilliant. This unusual location seems to attract this species lately.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: A Turkey Vulture at Madawaska Aug. 21 was an unusual location. The species has occurred there before as a transient. A Red-shouldered Hawk was at Tupper June 12 and an eagle (sp.) was at Lewis July 15. No Spruce Grouse were seen at Madawaska. They seem to be dying out there. D.E.C. released Ring-necked Pheasants on a put-and-take basis near Keene and Saranac Lake. Three Ruddy Turnstones were at Four Bros. June 16. Killdeer numbers are up. Ring-billed Gulls built up to 70 at Tupper by Aug. 31. Four Black Terns were at Tupper June 6.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: At least one Great Horned Owl is at Paul Smiths. Barred Owls made most campers' evenings more of a wilderness experience than usual but Saw-whet continued absent. Whip-poor-wills were at Jay, Malone, Sugar Bush, and a town called Street Road near Ticonderoga. A flight of 17 Common Nighthawks passed over Paul Smiths in mid-August. Both Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Belted Kingfishers were present in fine numbers. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Hairy Woodpeckers were eating pin cherries (*Prunus pensylvanica*) at Piseco Lake. A female Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was at Newcomb near where, last year, Alice Jones saw a male at a hole with a young bird pecking out.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Great year for Great Crested Flycatchers. A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was at St. Huberts July 2 (R & M Mc). Most of us overlook this species. Least Flycatchers were half last year's numbers. Five Gray Jays were at Madawaska Aug. 25. Two Common Ravens at Street Road July 23 (FL). This is a new location and the seven at St. Huberts was a high count. Lots of Boreal Chickadees including a nest found by Alice Jones with adult carrying a soiled diaper from a yellow birch stub at North Elba June 25. Five people commented on low counts for Winter Wren. A Mockingbird was at Street Road July 23. Swainson's Thrush was in fair numbers. No Eastern Bluebirds at Tupper but a few at Brandon, one at Street Road, two at Piseco, three at Newcomb, one at St. Huberts and one



at Indian Lake. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two at Onchiota as usual, four at Brandon all summer, one at St. Huberts, June 25 and one at Newcomb in late June. Finding a nest could be difficult, but would be rewarding.

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:** A Yellow-throated Vireo at Speculator July 13 was a good find in this Region. Red-eyed Vireo: 101 and 96 on each of two breeding bird surveys. A Philadelphia Vireo was at Newcomb July 12. Warbling Vireo: two at St. Huberts is all. Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Ovenbird were at least half the normal numbers. Chestnut-sided Warbler and Redstart were very successful with 40 or more on some survey routes. There were 16 Nashville Warblers at Newcomb in late June. Betty Hedges saw a male Cape May Warbler on the Brandeth Road July 30. Two Bay-breasted Warblers were at Speculator June 13. Robert and Margaret McKinney saw an adult male **CONNECTICUT WARBLER** at Indian Lake at 20 feet in good light with 10 power binocs. It was singing the typical song on July 1. It was not a young Mourning Warbler. The same observer banded an immature last summer at same location. This bears watching next season since a nest would be quite a find. It could happen. Here is a nesting that has already happened. Dan Nickerson found a **WILSON'S WARBLER** nest at North Meadow, North Elba in a hummock, on July 1 for a first verified nesting of the species in New York. There were four eggs. Mike Peterson saw bird and eggs later in the day.

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** High count for Northern Oriole was five at Street Road. Four Rusty Blackbirds were at Raquette Lake July 12 for the high count. Two Cardinals were at Street Road July 23. Evening Grosbeaks raised young at Tupper. Red Crossbills were in small flocks in late summer. A **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** was buzzing at Whallonsburg on June 29 (DN & later JMP). Swamp Sparrows were scarce.

Paul Smiths, New York 12970

## REGION 8 - HUDSON-MOHAWK

RICHARD P. GUTHRIE

Once again, data from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Surveys provided a basis of measure of our current nesting season success. This region was well-covered this year with seventeen surveys conducted, thirteen of which are recounted here. The cumulative species total of all the surveys is 111 species. However, only 18 species were found on every route. The ten most numerous species of the combined surveys are: Red-winged Blackbird 1107; Starling 564; Am. Robin 560; Barn Swallow 428; Song Sparrow 377; Red-eyed Vireo 371; Com. Grackle 360; Com. Crow 324; Wood Thrush 314 and Com. Yellowthroat 306. Twenty-eight species were among the ten most numerous species on at least one route, but only American Robin appeared on all 13 lists.

The surveys can be grouped according to the physiographic ecosystems with interesting but predictable results and a few surprises. The Adirondack ecosystem had four surveys; Hope Falls (July 5), South Horicon (July 6), North River (July 1) and Warrensburg (July 7). Species of northern affinity reported from these counts include: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Swainson's Thrush, Solitary Vireo, Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow-

rumped, Mourning and Canada Warblers; also Dark-eyed Junco and White-throated Sparrow. High tallies were recorded for Broad-winged Hawk (8), Bank Swallow (107), Red-eyed Vireo (253) and Ovenbird (94). Conspicuously absent were: Eastern Meadowlark and House Sparrow. Interesting species recorded were three Golden-crowned Kinglets (HFalls), Northern Parula (HFalls), Mourning Warbler (HFalls & No. River), and Pine Warbler (one each S. Horicon & Warrensburg). The highest Cardinal and the only Tufted Titmouse, Mockingbird and House Finch counts came from the Hudson Lowlands surveys, Catskill (June 7), North Easton (June 21) and Ballston Lake (July 6). The Ball L. survey had a few curious absences in being the only survey not reporting Least Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Warbler and Northern Oriole. Also missing from Ball L. were Chimney Swift, Ovenbird, Bobolink and Scarlet Tanager. However, these were absent also from one or more other counts and may be partly attributed to the late date of the survey. On the high side, Ball L. tallied max, in Mourning Dove (41), Com. Crow (51), Black-capped Chickadee (18), White-breasted Nuthatch (16), House Wren (22) and Com. Grackle (73).

Bridging the altitudinal extremes of the two previous ecosystems are the Catskill and Taconic Mountains and the Appalachian Plateau (Helderberg Hills). Combined, these ecosystems have the greatest area in this region and were covered by the most surveys. These surveys were: Petersburg (June 17), So. Berne (June 26), Cobleskill (June 29), Duanesburg (July 1), Medusa (July 3) and Platte Cove (June 30). Representative species from both northern and southern affinities may be found along the same route. For example, Yellow-throated Vireo (three) was accompanied by Yellow-rumped Warbler and Purple Finch on the Cobleskill survey. Another Yellow-throated Vireo, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Worm-eating Warbler, Blue-winged Warblers (two) and Louisiana Waterthrush (five) joined Alder Flycatcher (seven), Hermit Thrush (two), Yellow-rumped Warbler and Purple Finch and White-throated Sparrows (four each) on the So. Berne survey.

Contributors to this report include: Ken Able, Jim Bush, Ann & Tom Brown, Paul Connor, Juanita Cook, Rena Dodd, Kate Dunham, Barbara & Hugh Gardina, William Gorman, Elisabeth Grace, Richard P. Guthrie, Ron LaForce, Betty Laros, William Lee, Sam Madison, Robert Marx, Tom Palmer, Walt Sabin, Alan Schroeder, Rudd Stone, Hudson Winn and Robert Yunick.

**LOONS-DUCKS:** Common Loon: one Thirteenth Lake (Warren Co.) June 30; two Hudson R at Albany, Aug. 17. Double-crested Cormorant: a few regular along Hudson R thru period; max. 27 Inboct late Aug. Snowy Egret: three Hudson, Aug. 3 (WL).

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: thru period Ghent, max. 11 (B & HG). Cooper's Hawk: one Chatham Aug. 4, only report. Red-shouldered Hawk: intermittently thru period Chatham (KD). Marsh Hawk: singles reported from Columbia, Saratoga and Washington Counties each month. Osprey: Aug. 3 Col. Co.; Aug. 14 Hudson R at New Balt., early migrants. Least Sandpiper: a late northbound or early southbound individual Ghent, June 14 (B & HG). Great Black-backed Gull: varying numbers Hudson R thru period, max. 116 Coeymans, June 10 (RPG).

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** Yellow-billed Cuckoo: reported only from Catskill BBS. Black-billed Cuckoo: seven BBS reports, well up from last year. Com. Nighthawk: encouraging reports of 50 to "well over 100," mid-Aug. Chimney Swift: nine from a remote stretch on the No. River BBS, probably a group of traditionalists still using hollow trees as nest

sites. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: very few reports, total three from BBS's. Pileated Woodpecker: well reported incl. ten from BBS's. **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER**: one Palmer's Ravine, early June (TP & RM). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 20 No. River BBS; 13 H. Falls BBS, (both very high).

**FLYCATCHERS--STARLINGS**: Olive-sided Flycatcher: a remarkable five singing July 10, Partridge Run (Albany Co.) (KA); also two Warren Co. reports mid-July. Cliff Swallow: a distressing 16 (low) from BBS's, compare two this year vs 11 last year on So. Berne BBS. Eastern Bluebird: five from four BBS's; reported absent from a long time nest area. Golden-crowned Kinglet: adult feeding five fledglings Aug. 24 No. River (RPG).

**VIREOS--WARBLERS**: Warbler reports include: Pine Warbler: one each So. Horicon and Warrensburg BBS's; also one Chatham Aug. 6 (KD). Prairie Warbler: one each Catskill and So. Berne BBS's. Northern Waterthrush: none reported on BBS's, max. five So. Berne. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Berne June 24 (KA), only report. Early warbler movement came in mid to late Aug., spurring reports of many of our northerly species, such as Nashville, N. Parula, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Yellow-rumped and Blackburnian.

**WEAVERS--SPARROWS**: Bobolink: max. 18 Duanesburg BBS. Purple Finch: seems more widespread than usual, reported from ten BBS's. Pine Siskin: two lingered until June 16 at Albany Pine Bush (AS). Vesper Sparrow: two each Cobleskill and Duanesburg BBS's. White-throated Sparrow: reported on six BBS's, max. 19 Warrensburg.

P.O. Box 46, New Baltimore, New York 12124

## REGION 9 -- DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

June was warm and dry, with the first appreciable rain falling on July 3-4. July was more normal, but things turned cool and somewhat wet during early August. The latter half of that month was hot and humid with very little precipitation.

The usual post-breeding invasion of herons occurred in mid-August with Great Egrets being the most numerous. Shorebirds started through in July with a continuous build-up in numbers through August. Warbler movements were in full swing by mid-August, with a good tally both of species and numbers. Perhaps the big event of the season was the number of Acadian Flycatchers reported. Birds were found in all areas of the Region, with as many as three or four on each report. Several nests were under study. Other *Empidonax* flycatchers were also well-represented, with more Willows reported than ever before. There were very few accidentals reported, but in all it was a fairly active season.

Contributors and observers cited: Al Brayton, Tom Burke, Robert F. Deed, Florence Germond, Alice Jones, Mary and Jim Key, Helen Manson, Ken and Joan McDermott, Frank Murphey, John C. Orth, Eleanor Pink, Benton Seguin, Robert Speiser, John Tramontano.

Abbreviations: CB--Cornwall Bay; KP--Kingston Point; MC--Marshlands Conservancy, Rye; PP--Piermont Pier; PIP--Palisades Interstate Park; PL--Playland, Rye; Dutch--Dutchess

Co.; West—Westchester Co.; Oran—Orange Co.; Sull—Sullivan Co.; Ulst—Ulster Co.

**LOONS—DUCKS:** Common Loon: one thru June 13 in Dutch. Three obs well into July on Ashokan R. Horned Grebe: a "high-plumaged" bird remained at MC to June 3. Double-crested Cormorant: summered along the L.I. Sound coast of West. in greater numbers than usual. Two CB June 3. Numbers reduced in lower Hudson where only one was reported thru Aug. 5. Great Blue Heron: breeding birds at Stockbriar near Thompson P. in Dutch. Former location at Tamarack Swamp inactive. Little Blue Heron: one at PL Jun. 12. Great Egret: this and the less common Snowy Egret arrived in most areas in good numbers after mid-Aug. Black-crowned Night Heron: imms reported along the Hudson from KP south, dur. Aug. Glossy Ibis: two at MC June 25. Single birds at PL Jul 4 and MC Jul. 8. Mute Swan: northernmost breeders a pr at Sylvan L, Dutch thru Jun. Only one young present. Canada Goose: "Everywhere!" At least 500 flightless birds were trapped in PIP where they were fouling beaches and golf greens. They were shipped off by Fish and Wildlife personnel further south where they were released. Green-winged Teal: a male at PL Jun 9 was unexpected. Blue-winged Teal: usual few during summer, four CB, Aug. 17. One thru Aug. Buttermilk Pd. Dutch (V. Parkhurst). Wood Duck: described by JT as the most numerous duck of the summer. Greater Scaup: more than 15 at PL thru June. Reduced to a few by Jul. 31. Lesser Scaup: one pr remained at PP thru season. No evidence of breeding. Bufflehead: at PL thru Jul. 12.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Goshawk: continues to breed in previously reported areas. A pr at Pound Ridge raised four young. Cooper's Hawk: obs twice at Middletown Res. dur Jun. Red-shouldered Hawk: two ad obs in the vicinity of Bedford dur Jun. Another obs that month at Surebridge, PIP. Bald Eagle: one near L Welch Jun. 19 (RFD). Osprey: one at Inisfree, Dutch Jun. 14, and another thru entire period at CB (BS). Am. Kestrel: numbers down at Wawarsing but normal elsewhere. Bobwhite: unreported except in Dutch, where a small covey was obs near Pine Plains Aug. 6 (HM). Clapper Rail: four pr at MC thru Jun. and Jul. Common Gallinule: ten half-grown young with four ad at Goshen Sewage Ponds Aug. 5. Semipalmated Plover: last northern migrant obs Jun. 3 at E. West. A few southbound birds were back by mid-July. Three at PP first week of Aug. Ruddy Turnstone: one PP Aug. 11; one KP Jul. 30. Upland Sandpiper: four at Blue Chip Farm, Walkkill thru mid-Aug. Migrants arr at Stewart Airport July 24, and inc to 13 by Aug. 23. One at Croton Pt. Aug. 13 was a rarity for West. (EDT). Solitary Sandpiper: first migrant returned Aug. 7 at Dover. Only a few by end of period. Sanderling: one Aug. 3 at Brown's Pd. Newburgh. Great Black-backed Gull: by far the dominant gull in the mid-Hudson area. At least 75 reported regularly at CB, more than twice the number of Herrings. 96 at PP July 25 were outnumbered by 125 Ring-bills. By Aug. 11 the Black-backs inc to 410, more than twice the Ring-bill count. Bonaparte's Gull: two CB Aug. 8; one PP Aug. 11. Common Tern: two over Hudson at KP July 9. First reported lower Hudson, two at PP Aug. 2. Inc to 20 by Aug. 5. Black Skimmer: one at PL Jul. 5 made the third annual appearance there.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Whip-poor-will: numbers low thru period. Common Night-hawk: residents in poor numbers, but migration in late Aug. was excellent. 19 over Newburgh Aug. 27; 31 over P'kpsie and 43 over Wawarsing same date. Chimney Swift: more than 300 over Stanfordville, Dutch Aug. 20 (FG). Ruby-throated Hummingbird: a pr regularly at feeder of FG in Clinton Corners thru June and July. A female there with two young dur Aug. No male obs. About ten at North Bay, Cruger's Is. Aug. 27. Obs from a canoe by AB. Pileated Woodpecker: almost none reported. Numbers must be low. Red-bellied Woodpecker: four at Pleasant Valley feeder thru July. Two had much brown color on the head. Red-headed Woodpecker: one PP July 9 (V. Schwartz).

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** Eastern Kingbird: numbers up after successful breeding; seven appeared to be migrating together in Dutch Aug. 29. Acadian Flycatcher: numbers too numerous to mention. Appeared on ten reports, often with as many as three birds.

Several nests reported. Willow Flycatcher: both this species and the Alder had an excellent breeding record. Several birds reported on most reports. A Willow and Alder were calling from opposite sides of the road at the N end of the Bashakill in early June (BS). Eastern Wood Pewee: numbers appear down. Olive-sided Flycatcher: moved thru early. First Aug. 1 at Wawarsing, at least two weeks early. Obs regularly there thru Aug. Swallows: Migration started about Jul. 1 in West. with a few Trees reported. By Jul. 18 in one two hour period, 400 Trees, 150 Banks and 100 Barns were obs at Rye. Purple Martin: only one of three sites was active in Dutch this season. House Wren: some reports indicate numbers down locally. Winter Wren: present thru Jun. at Sterling L, Oran. Brown Thrasher: unusually scarce in Oran. Only three sightings in the Middletown area thru Jun. and Jul. Hermit Thrush: three singing vic of Huntington L, Sull dur Jun. Two imm there Aug. 29. Elev 1,200 ft (Dick Guthrie). Two singing at Pound Ridge Jul. 2. Swainson's Thrush: first mig Aug. 16 Amenia. Eastern Bluebird: FG had 75 boxes out in the Clinton Corners area of Dutch. Fledged 198 young, 26 died in boxes. One box had young as late as Sept. 1. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: max. six Aug. 19 Pleasant Valley. One there Aug. 26-28 was late. Golden-crowned Kinglet: one Rye Jun 25 was probably a late migrant. One near Woodstock July 24 (FM). Cedar Waxwing: flocking by mid-Aug. Numbers good.

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:** White-eyed Vireo: one Aug. 16 Amenia. Solitary Vireo: nest with 5 eggs (one cowbird) near Tuxedo (RS). Philadelphia Vireo: three reports from the P'kpsie area, two Aug. 24 and one Aug. 26 (MJK). Warbling Vireo: five Blauvelt Swamp, Rock June 1; three Haverstraw Marsh June 10. Warblers: numbers exc in Dutch from mid-Aug. on. Worm-eating Warbler: one singing at Esopus June 15. First migrant near Wawarsing Aug. 7; two Pleasant Valley Aug. 19. Blue-winged Warbler: eight Aug. 16 at Amenia. "Brewster's" Warbler: one near Queensboro L PIP June 14. Obs again several days later (RS). "Lawrence's" Warbler: one Silver Mine L, PIP Jun. 11 (EDT). Tennessee Warbler: from Aug. 16 on the most common migrant warbler in Dutch. Nashville Warbler: first migrant Aug. 8 at Wawarsing. Four others thru end of Aug. in Dutch. No. Parula: three Aug. 24-26 at P'kpsie (MJK). Magnolia Warbler: a singing male at Rockland, Sull Co. Jul. 2 (Tom Davis). Five near P'kpsie Aug. 26. Cape May Warbler: first four near Pleasant Valley Aug. 19 and six near LaGrange Aug. 22 and seven near P'kpsie Aug. 24. Yellow-rumped Warbler: first migrant Aug. 7 near Wawarsing. Very early. Cerulean Warbler: six singing near the Long Mt. Parking area, PIP Jun. 14 (RFD). Several reports of nesting birds in Dutch and Oran. **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** a singing male resident at Sterling L thru first week of Jul. (RS). Blackpoll Warbler: a late bird Jun. 7 at Millbrook School. Pine Warbler: a singing bird at Cuddebackville, Oran Jun. 11 (BS, EDT). Palm Warbler: first mig Aug. 19 in Dutch, early. Mourning Warbler: a singing male near Turnwood, Ulst Jul. 3 (Tom Davis). Yellow-breasted Chat: single males found at Manhattanville Col. and Westchester Co. Airport Jun. 25. Wilson's Warbler: first mig 2 Aug. 19 Dutch. Six other birds to end of period near P'kpsie. Canada Warbler: KJM found three along road from Olive Bridge to Sundown in Ulster.

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** Bobolink: 12 at SUNY Campus at Purchase Jun. 25 was up from the one pr found there last year. Red-winged Blackbird: flocking by mid-Jun. in Newburgh. 125 there Jun. 17. Orchard Oriole: an imm male near P'kpsie Aug. 20 and another near Queensboro L, PIP Jun. 16. Purple Finch: numbers very low. Two near Bedford Jun. 25 was the only West report. The Waterman June census had only three in Dutch as opposed to 101 House Finches. Savannah Sparrow: 12 Blue Chip Farm, Wallkill Jun. 27. Grasshopper: one Westbrookville Jun. 18, inc. to two by Jul. 1 (KJM). Two at Galeville Airport Jul. 16 (FM, AB). Sharp-tailed Sparrow: two pr at MC in late Jun. Field Sparrow: an impressive flock of 20-25 near Welch L on Aug. 2. White-throated Sparrow: one quite late at MC on Jun. 25.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

## REGION 10 – MARINE

BARBARA J. SPENCER

The Region's late spring developed into a slightly cooler and wetter-than-average summer with no apparent weather-related effects on local breeding activity. Little land bird migration was noted in August, although shorebird migration seemed normal.

### June Bird Counts

Observers in three Christmas Count circles continued their June bird counts: Captree for the seventh year, Northern Nassau for the fifth, and Central Suffolk for the fourth consecutive year. One difficulty common to all three counts is the problem of attracting enough participants to maintain continuity in the areas covered so that meaningful comparisons are possible. The Central Suffolk compiler noted that the number of participants this year was just barely adequate to cover the major areas, and urged that efforts to recruit more observers be made in future years. Perhaps some readers can find the time to help census these circles next June and preserve the continuity of this valuable data.

The Captree count totaled 127 species with seven new to the count: Snow Goose, Lesser Yellowlegs, Royal Tern, Kentucky Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Bobolink and Pine Siskin. High counts of 6011 Common Terns (up from a 1974 high of 5000) and 706 Least Terns (296 the previous high) were reported. Perhaps some of these birds were from displaced Long Island Sound populations.

Northern Nassau tallied 111 species. New to the count were Whip-poor-will, American Bittern, Bonaparte's Gull, Northern Waterthrush, and Rusty Blackbird. Canada Geese have increased from 190 in 1974 to 391 in 1978. A similar increase in the number of Mallards (240 to 445) also reflects a number of birds on small suburban ponds maintained, at least in part, by handouts. In places, these birds represent a substantial pollution problem. A high of 55 Laughing Gulls was part of a general increase in the number of that species present during the breeding season in Long Island Sound waters. Least Terns (60) have been reduced in number from a 1974 high of 613, when the colonies left the area because of human disturbance. Also down in numbers were Chimney Swifts, Long-billed Marsh Wrens, Red-eyed Vireos, White-eyed Vireos, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Chipping Sparrows.

As part of the Northern Nassau count the village of Sea Cliff was counted street by street for the fourth straight year. Sixty-one species were found. The numbers of individuals of several common species recovered from low figures of the last two years, revealing what may be regularly recurring cycles. Notably free from fluctuation was the Mockingbird, with tallies of 15, 19, 19 and 18 for the four years. This conspicuous bird is less apt to be overlooked than some others, and may have saturated suitable locations.

The Central Suffolk count had a high total of 142 species with eight new to the area: Pintail, White-winged Scoter, Hooded Merganser, Common Snipe, Marbled Godwit, Chuck-will's-widow, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and White-throated

Sparrow. Species in significantly higher numbers than previous years were: Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Coot, Common Tern, Screech Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Wood Pewee, Tree Swallow, Brown Creeper, Common Yellowthroat, and House Finch. Species showing significant declines were Wood Duck, Bobwhite, Black-capped Chickadee, House Wren, Am. Robin, White-eyed Vireo, Brown-headed Cowbird, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee and Vesper Sparrow. The compiler attributed the Bobwhite decrease to the last two severe winters. He termed the White-eyed Vireo "alarmingly scarce" in the area. Screech Owl numbers depend almost entirely on the amount of time spent calling them. This species is undoubtedly more numerous in all count areas than the numbers indicate.

#### New Breeding Locations and a Specimen Record

Several newsworthy discoveries were made by Paul and Francine Buckley and Michael Gochfeld in the course of a two-day helicopter survey of colonial waterbird populations on the coastline of Long Island, the sixth such survey. Double-crested Cormorants were discovered nesting on rocky islands off Fisher's Island. This is the furthest SW breeding location of the northeastern population to date. Tobacco Lot Pond on Gardiner's Island held 500+ adult birds, but no nesting activity was discerned. A new heronry was discovered on South Brother Island in the East River where a colony of Snowy Egrets, 30 pairs of Cattle Egrets, and a number of Black-crowned Night Herons were breeding. Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls were breeding on both North Brother and South Brother Islands, using abandoned buildings for nest sites in some cases. The first Laughing Gull nest and eggs on Long Island in 88 years was found on one of the Line Islands north of Jones Beach. Two adult Gull-billed Terns, a species which the Buckleys and Gochfeld first found nesting on the Line Islands three years ago, were seen with two young birds on July 22 (GSR). On August 13, an immature Gull-billed Tern was found dead on North Line Island by AJL to establish a first state specimen record. The skin was deposited in the American Museum of Natural History in New York. At least one singing Alder Flycatcher was present during June in Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx Co., and there were indications that the species may have bred. A nest was critically observed, and appeared to resemble published descriptions and photographs of nests of that species. Unfortunately, absolute proof of breeding was not obtained (JF).

#### Cox's Ledge Pelagic Trips

<u>Species</u>	<u>May 27</u>	<u>June 3</u>	<u>June 10</u>	<u>July 16</u>	<u>Aug. 8</u>	<u>Aug. 26</u>
Northern Fulmar	21	3				
Cory's Shearwater				50+	30	24
Greater Shearwater	45	379	70	500+		33
Sooty Shearwater	60	436	600+	1	1	1
Manx Shearwater		1		1		
Audubon's Shearwater						1(2)
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	55	9	500	200+	200+	40
Gannet	31	4	3			2
phalarope sp.						1
Pomarine Jaeger	5					4

<u>Species</u>	<u>May 27</u>	<u>June 3</u>	<u>June 10</u>	<u>July 16</u>	<u>Aug. 8</u>	<u>Aug. 26</u>
jaeger sp.				1		
Black-legged Kittiwake						1
Royal Tern			1			

Observers: May 27—K. and S. Blackshaw; June 3—THD, P. Polshek, K. Ray; June 10—G. Tudor, M. Kleinbaum, ROP, P. and F. Buckley, J. Ash, *et al.*; July 16—P. Gillen, E. Hennelly; Aug. 8—A. Keith; Aug. 26—THD, AJL, ROP, BJS, *et al.*

Comments: counts in bold face are highest ever for the Montauk to Cox's Ledge run. The June 10 trip also listed Common Grackle, and "several square miles" of Finback Whales and porpoises. On July 16, a House Sparrow was hopping around the Viking Starship until it jumped ship to a Rhode Island boat and wasn't seen again. The Audubon's Shearwater seen on the Aug. 26 trip was associated with warm 72° F. water from a Gulf Stream eddy. There were probably two birds, although observers concentrated on the closer of the two birds. On Sept. 1 and 2 Al Lorenzetti observed five Audubon's Shearwaters 90 miles SE of Long Island in Hudson Canyon. Water temperature was 73° F. He reported water of 80° F there two weeks earlier. It is likely that Audubon's Shearwater is a regular August occurrence in our area when the Gulf Stream eddies approach closely enough.

Rarities include: Sandhill Crane, Black Rail, Black Vulture, Glaucous Gull, Little Gull.

June Count compilers: Captree, Frances File and Anthony J. Lauro. Northern Nassau, Ralph Cioffi. Central Suffolk, Gilbert S. Raynor.

Contributors and initialed observers: Jim Ash, Francine G. Buckley, Paul A. Buckley, Ralph Cioffi, Arthur P. Cooley, Harry N. Darrow, Thomas H. Davis, Stephen B. Dempsey, Joseph DiCostanzo, John Farrand, Frances File, Michael Gochfeld, David Larsen, Anthony J. Lauro, Emanuel Levine, Alan Lindberg, Peter W. Post, Robert O. Paxton, Gilbert S. Raynor, Barbara J. Spencer, Wade Wander.

LOONS—DUCKS: A summering Red-throated Loon was present at Great Kills Park, Staten Island July 26 (*vide* THD). One, probably two, AUDUBON'S SHEARWATERS were seen SE of Block Island Aug. 26 (THD, AJL, ROP, BJS, *et al.*), while five were seen during a two-day stay at Hudson Canyon by Al Lorenzetti. All of these birds were associated with warm Gulf Stream water. An adult Great Cormorant, also summering, was seen at Montauk Aug. 27 (THD). While Double-crested Cormorants are regular in summer, up to eight birds in Central Park Reservoir June 28 through July 6 was noteworthy (R. Welden). The concentration of 500+ birds on Gardiner's Island was perhaps unprecedented (FGB, PAB, MG), as was the presence of breeding pairs near Fisher's Island noted by the same observers. A Cattle Egret was at Jamaica Bay July 22 (GSR) and on July 29 (DL). A remarkable number of 30 pairs of Cattle Egrets were among other herons in a new location on South Brother Island (FGB, PAB, MG). A pair or two of Yellow-crowned Night Herons still persist at Mt. Sinai Harbor (GSR). A pair of Northern Shovelers with six young June 1 at Jamaica Bay was an unusual breeding record (PAB). This is one of the very few locations where these ducks breed on Long Island. A female Black Scoter summered in Moriches Bay as did a few Red-breasted Mergansers.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vultures were seen June 30 on Great Gull Island (JDiC), and on Ellis Island July 1 (PWP). Although observed without binoculars, field marks and flight characteristics of a **BLACK VULTURE** sighted in Sea Cliff July 29 were seen well enough



to convince the observers of the identification (RC, BJS). Following the mating display of two well-described Cooper's Hawks seen at Muttontown Preserve this spring (AL), single adult Cooper's Hawks were seen on several occasions in May and June. On July 29, an immature Cooper's Hawk was observed flying 20 feet over one of the field at the Preserve (AL). Six Broad-winged Hawks were at the Preserve, where they breed, on Aug. 22 (AL). A Peregrine Falcon was present in midtown Manhattan Aug. 10-16 (J. Wall), and one was seen at Bethpage State Park Aug. 30 (EL). The most serendipitous find of the summer occurred Aug. 19 when Tim O'Connor looked up from cutting a hedge and saw a soaring SANDHILL CRANE overhead. The bird was carefully observed for several minutes with a telescope, well-described, and sketched by Tim, who is an artist. BLACK RAILS, displaced from Oak Beach marsh through human disturbance, were heard calling from similar habitat nearby June 25-26 (AJL). A concentration of 81 American Oystercatchers on North Line Island Aug. 20 and 27 may have represented most of the South Shore population. Approximately one-third were birds of the year (AJL). Piping Plovers were present at Jones Beach strip breeding locations in normal numbers (ROP). An Am. Golden Plover arrived at Jamaica Bay July 25 (WW). Hudsonian Godwits appeared at North Line Island in good numbers with a maximum of eight July 22. Four were present at Jamaica Bay July 24 through the period, and several were at Shinnecock. One Marbled Godwit was seen on North Line Island June 15 (PAB) and three were there from July 16 on. Another arrived at Jamaica Bay July 15 (WW). More unusual was the occurrence of a Marbled Godwit on the North Shore at Sands Point, Aug. 10 through Labor Day (G. Quinn). Whimbrels were well reported with a maximum of 27 on Aug. 8 on the Loop Causeway at Jones Beach (R. Miller), and 13 on North Line Island Aug. 12 (AJL). One North Shore bird was seen at Sea Cliff Aug. 1 (BJS), while three were at Moriches Bay Aug. 16 (F. Fairchild). Two Upland Sandpipers were at Calverton on the Grumman airfield Aug. 14-15 (GSR), and a pair was still holding on near the Hofstra campus in Hempstead. An adult with one young bird was found at Floyd Bennett Field (R. Cunningham). Wilson's Phalaropes were reported from several locations: one at Oak Beach marsh July 17-20 (ROP), three July 23-30 (J. Dowdell, ROP), two in the sewage ponds at Pilgrim State Hospital Aug. 20 (AJL), and one at Jamaica Bay July 25. A Northern Phalarope was at Oak Beach marsh Aug. 28 (ROP). 3800 Short-billed Dowitchers were at Jamaica Bay July 22 (WW). At least one Long-billed Dowitcher was present at Jamaica Bay from July 22 (GSR, DL). A maximum of 80 Western Sandpipers were seen on North Line Island July 22 (ROP) with 45 still present Aug. 18 (RC, BJS). Six to eight White-rumped Sandpipers were at Jamaica Bay from Aug. 19 (DL) through the end of Aug., as were 40+ Stilt Sandpipers. An early Stilt Sandpiper was seen at Moriches Inlet June 30 (GSR). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper arrived at Jones Beach Aug. 13 (W. Wilkins). A second-year Glaucous Gull summered June 27 through July 13 at Jamaica Bay (WW). Perhaps the same bird wandered to Sands Point Aug. 2 (RC, BJS). The abundance of summering Laughing Gulls raised hopes of breeding on the North Shore of Long Island. However, Mt. Sinai Harbor was checked for nests June 21 with no sign of breeding. A nest and eggs were found on the Line Islands (above) June 15 (PAB, FGB, MG), the first since 1890, when the last eggs were found at Cedar Beach. July 27, 800+ adult Laughing Gulls were observed around Hempstead Harbor (RC) as summering birds were joined by post-breeding adult birds presumably from New Jersey. (Marked first year birds have come from locations near Barnegat this time of year, previously). A sub-adult LITTLE GULL summered at Breezy Point, Queens (PWP). Gull-billed Terns bred successfully again on the Line Islands with two adult and two immature birds seen July 22 (GSR). Royal Terns were present in reduced numbers with only four at Shinnecock Inlet Aug. 20 (GSR). A Royal Tern seen at Napeague June 12 was making scrapes in the sand suggestive of breeding behavior (JA). A Caspian Tern was at Jamaica Bay in mid-June (JA). A breeding-plumaged Black Tern was late at Cedar Beach June 26 (ROP). Black Terns were moving through in August with four at Mecox Aug. 17, one there Aug. 26 (DL), four at North Line Island Aug. 12 (AJL), and four the same day at Sands Point (RC, BJS). Eight to ten Black Terns were reported from Moriches Inlet Aug. 20 (APC).

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** Yellow-billed Cuckoos were more plentiful during the June count period than usual. A Great Horned Owl flying over the Henry Hudson Parkway at 125th Street July 28 (L. Holland) was probably a post-breeding wanderer. Chuck-will's-widows called through the summer at Oak Beach (AJL), and at Calverton until June 16 (GSR). Nighthawks moved in moderate numbers from Aug. 19 through the period. A Red-headed Woodpecker in Mastic June 24 on the edge of a salt marsh was probably a late migrant or wanderer (GSR).

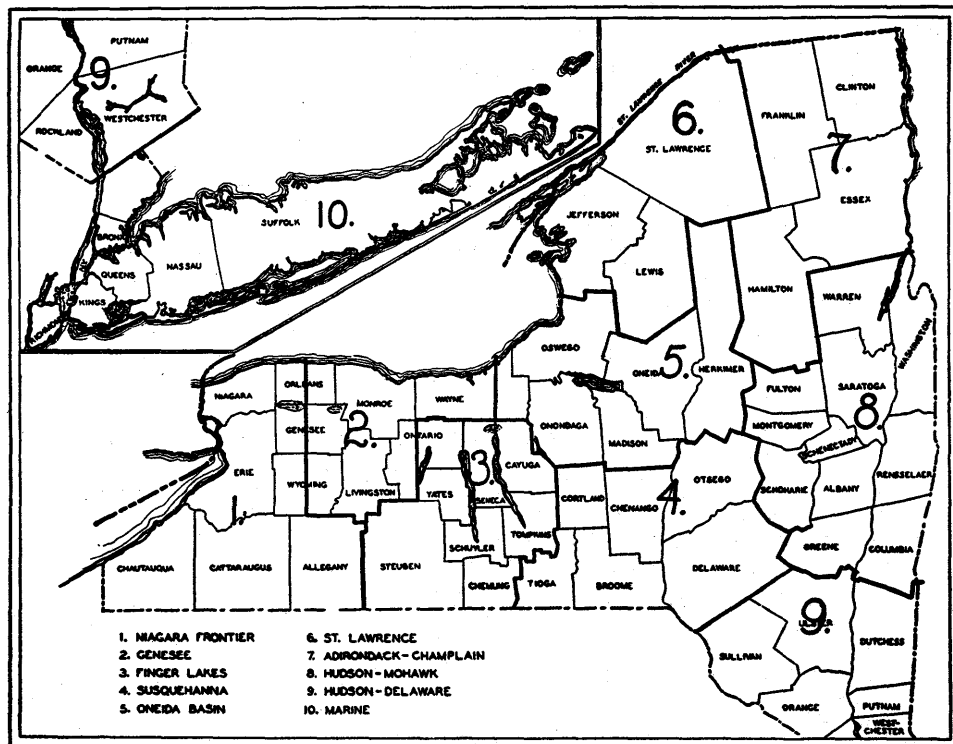
**FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS:** The first NW winds Aug. 19 after a prolonged doldrum brought several *Empidonax* flycatchers to Sea Cliff including one Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (BJS). Brown Creepers probably bred at Upton where two were seen in suitable habitat through July 13. Carolina Wrens were sparsely reported although a few persist despite two hard winters. Eastern Bluebirds nested in Riverhead where they were banded by L. Wilcox. A few pairs continue in Connetquot State Park.

**VIREOS-WARBLERS:** The first groups of warblers arrived in the area Aug. 19. Ten species were in Hempstead Lake State Park with large numbers of Blackburnian Warblers noteworthy; 16 were observed in one hour (EL). A Worm-eating Warbler was at Garvies Point Aug. 20 (BJS). Earlier, an immature Prothonotary Warbler was netted on Great Gull Island Aug. 12 (J DiC).

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** Two Pine Siskins lingered at a thistle feeder until June 18 in Deer Park (FF). Grasshopper Sparrows thought to be breeding were observed July 9 and 12 near Pilgrim State Hospital, a new location. A breeding bird survey of the old Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn found 20 singing male Grasshopper Sparrows. The data was gathered by JA to aid in a land use plan by the Park Service.

154 Dayton Street, Sea Cliff, New York 11579

## REPORTING REGIONS



For descriptions of Regions see Kingbird Vol. IV Nos. 1 and 2

## REPORTING DEADLINES

Winter Season: December, January, February

Deadline is March 7

Spring Season: March, April, May

Deadline is June 7

Summer Season: June, July, August

Deadline is September 7

Fall Season: September, October, November

Deadline is December 7

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