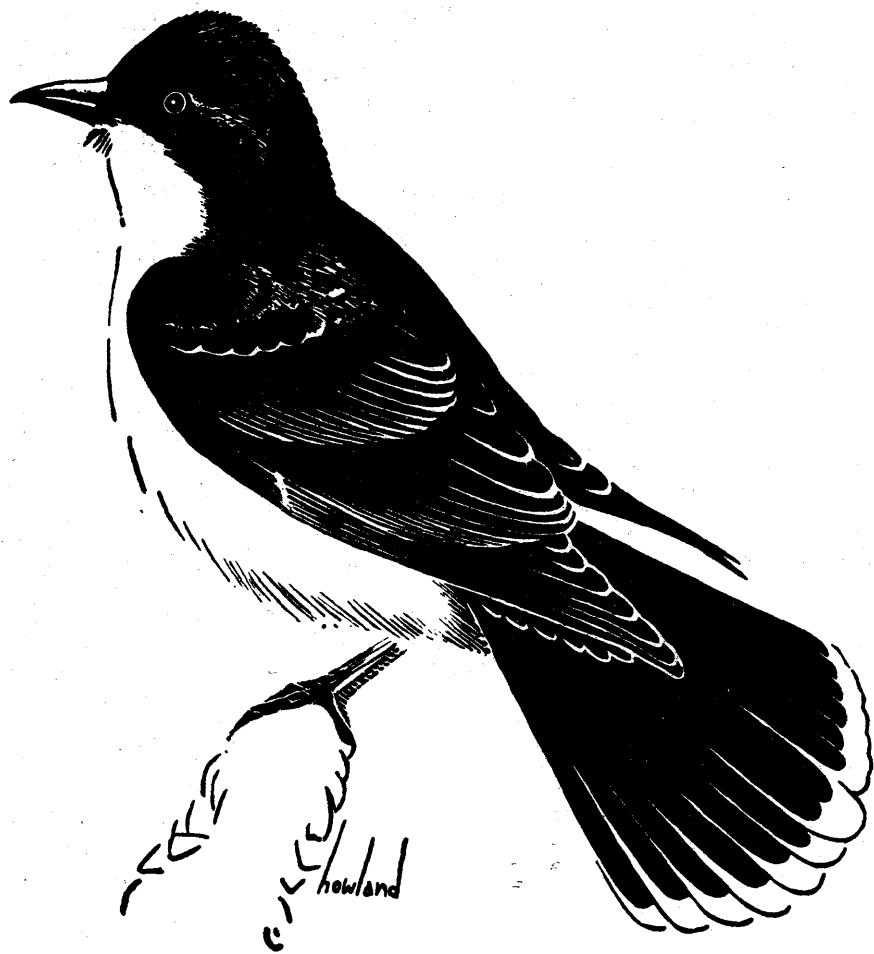


# The KINGBIRD



VOL. XXIX, NO. 4

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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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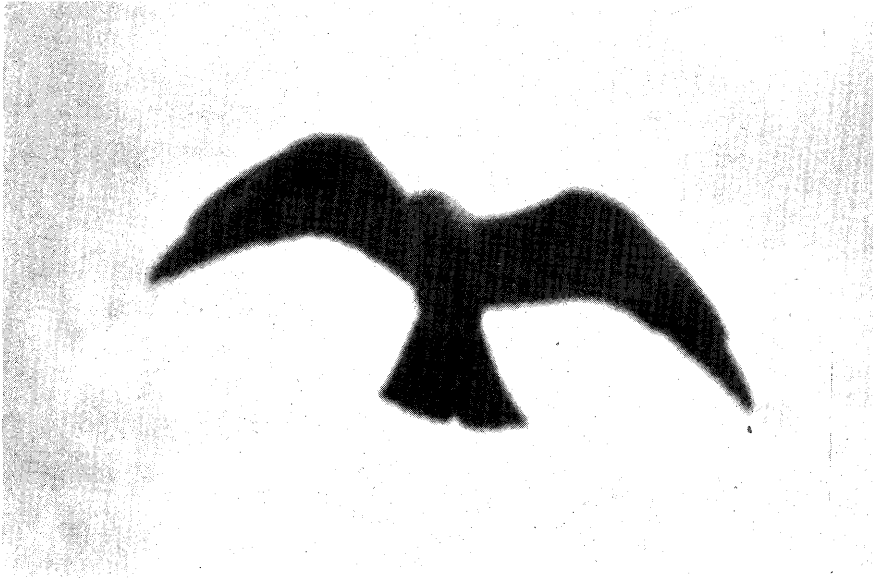
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*Highlights of the Fall Season*  
*Guest Editor*—Robert F. Andrie

*Circulation Manager* — Frederick C. Dittrich

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*Mississippi Kite*  
*Staten Island*      *Bernie Paul*

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES 33. MISSISSIPPI KITE

ROBERT CLERMONT

On 28 May 1979, the first Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) ever recorded in New York State was seen at the LaTourette Golf Course, Staten Island (Richmond County) by the writer and Richard ZainEldeen. The following day, a second individual was seen by alerted observers in the area, and the two birds were seen, together and separately, by many qualified observers over a period of ten days. The final sighting reported was on 8 June 1979 about a mile away at Moravian Cemetery, an alternate site visited by the kites during their stay in the area.

When we first spotted the kite, all we saw was a falcon-like bird with peculiar flight disappearing over the trees. From its silhouette, we thought it might be a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), but we were unsatisfied with this identification. Quickly pursuing the bird to a nearby clearing, over which we saw it reappear circling and dipping, we examined it more closely with 8x binoculars; all at once we realized that we were looking at a Mississippi Kite.

Both birds were adults, free of markings except for a narrow, black mask on the lores and through the eyes and faint barring on the long, narrow, brownish, and slightly notched tail. The upper parts were blue-gray paling to pearl gray on the head and underparts. The primaries and secondaries were darker. The tarsi were yellow. The bill, remarkably small for a raptor, was horn-colored, and sharply down-curved into a fine-pointed hook, clearly seen in profile. The eyes were red. The birds were observed through a Bushnell 20x wide-angled telescope as they perched on an exposed tree limb some 200 feet away. Both birds had symmetrical gaps in the wings and tail, indicating molt. One had an especially large gap between the primaries and secondaries.

While perching, the kites had two poses. Immediately upon alighting for a brief pause, they held a distinctive horizontal stance, excellently illustrated by Arthur Singer in *Birds of North America* (Chandler S. Robbins, Bertel Bruun and Herbert S. Zim, Golden Press, N.Y., p. 67.) When perched for more extended periods of time, the birds assumed a more upright posture, like that of Arthur Singer's illustration of the White-tailed Kite in the same book.

The kites exhibited two styles of flight. When in direct flight, they beat their wings in a shallow, fluttering manner and appeared to drag their tails behind them like a train. When hunting, however, they glided and soared, in a "figure 8" over the area under scrutiny, the long, pointed wings held stiffly outstretched, the tail either folded or fanned. At this time, Brood II of the 17-year cicadas (*Magicicada*) was at its peak of emergence in the area, and several times a kite was observed to snatch a cicada in mid-air and deftly strip off its wings, all in one easy motion, with hardly a flutter of the wings.

When harassed by crows, the kites further demonstrated their aerial mastery and fearlessness by only sometimes taking leisurely flight and then suddenly turning upon their surprised pursuers and giving leisurely pursuit themselves, thus obliging the crows to engage in strenuous efforts to chase or to flee, as the case might be. The crows soon learned to ignore these proficient newcomers. It was noted during these encounters that the kites seemed slightly larger than the crows, because of their longer wings and tail; in body size, they are actually no larger than jays.

It has been suggested that perhaps the kites had followed the successive emergence of the 17-year cicadas northward. They certainly had an abundant food supply, as the cicadas were in plague proportions throughout the "Green Belt" of Staten Island, where the kites ranged. Alternatively, the birds could have accompanied a large, warm, humid low-pressure system that came up from the Gulf states prior to their first sighting here. It was noted that the last reported sighting was prior to the arrival of a cool, high-pressure system. Perhaps both factors, food and weather, had an influence. Certainly Mississippi Kites are not new to the Northeast, having been reported in New Jersey and New England recently.

The Mississippi Kite is native to the southeastern United States. James W. Parker and John C. Ogden (*American Birds*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 119-129, March 1979) have documented a range expansion of this species, both northward and westward; these authors conclude by predicting that the range extension will continue. Perhaps then we can look forward to seeing this species again in our area.

*115 Bionia Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10305*

## A REVIEW OF NEW YORK STATE BOREAL OWL RECORDS

ROBERT P. YUNICK

The report of three Boreal Owls (*Aegolius funereus*) in New York during the 1978-79 winter represents a record maximum number of occurrences of this retiring, rare owl for any one season in the state. This paper offers further details on two of these reports and summarizes the New York State reports of this species to date.

The first report was of an individual seen by David Smith, between 1000 and 1600 hours on 26 December 1978 in a thick cedar tree border along his driveway at 205 Circular Street, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County. The bird was very near a feeder and at times during the day was harassed by Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*). Smith reported the sighting to Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club's Dial-A-Bird telephone answering service. Three club members, myself among them, attempted to relocate the bird several days later, but did not succeed. The bird was not reported again.

Because of Smith's previous familiarity with this species in Minnesota, he had no doubt of its identity. I was able to examine three 35-mm. color transparencies that he took at close range with a telephoto lens and there was no doubt about the bird's identity. The bird's appearance in such an urban setting seems unusual. One usually associates the Boreal Owl with locations more remote than a densely settled city street. It is the first ever reported from Saratoga County.

The second record, also in eastern New York, was of a bird found dead on 5 February 1979 by James H. McTaggart under a spruce border in his yard at 24 Droms Rd. Extension, Glenville, Schenectady County. The bird appeared to have died at its roost during a clear, cold night when a northwest wind produced severe wind chill. McTaggart gave the specimen to Barrington S. Havens who in turn notified me of its existence.

When I weighed it on 7 February 1979 when it came into my possession, after having remained frozen since 5 February, it weighed 88.7 g. and appeared severely emaciated. This weight is less than the average weight of the smaller Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*). I gave the specimen to Dr. E. M. Reilly, Jr., of the New York State Museum in Albany where it is now NYSM 35251. It represents the first report of the species from Schenectady County.

The third record was a live specimen, seen and photographed 3-6 March 1979 by many observers at Northrup Creek, Monroe County

(Spahn, 1979). It represents the fifth record from Monroe County, all having occurred since 1964.

A review of the species' past records shows a recent increase in reports most likely resulting more from increased birding activity, more active interest in listing rare species, and improved communications among birders in recent years, than from any real increase in numbers of the species. There is a paucity of records prior to 1960 (three in the past century, four in the period 1914-22 and two in the 1950's) followed by six reports in the 1960's and six in the 1970's. Whereas most of the earlier reports were Adirondack (two reports) or near-Adirondack (seven reports) in origin, the majority of recent reports (nine of ten reports) has been from elsewhere, thereby greatly altering the distribution pattern of this species' presumed range. Monroe County has displaced Franklin County with the greatest number of reports.

However, for a species that is as secretive as this one, it is difficult, at best, to assess accurately the magnitude of its true presence from year to year. While three birds hardly constitute an invasion, this winter's influx is the closest occurrence to such an event yet on record. Seeing one dead or alive in the wild, still constitutes one of the state's rarest ornithological treats that certainly few people have experienced.

Unlike the two other owls of boreal North American forests, the Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) and Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*), which during their erratic incursions tend to reside for prolonged periods in one location, the Boreal Owl is an unpredictable species. State records show a maximum recorded residence in one location of no longer than seven days. Excluding the seven birds reported as collected, and the five that were found dead, the nine live records ranged from one to seven days duration in a single location, and averaged 2.4 days. For this reason, among others, the sighting of this species remains the much sought jewel in the crown of northern invading species.

Other than the recent individual sighting reports listed below, previous summaries or collections of reports have been made by Eaton (1914), Stoner (1945), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962) and Bull (1964, 1974, 1976). Of the 21 birds listed below, 12 were collected as specimens with ten of them listed in museum collections, six were photographed alive, and three are unverified sightings. Among the last (Nos. 8, 10 and 14), the Westchester County sighting was questioned

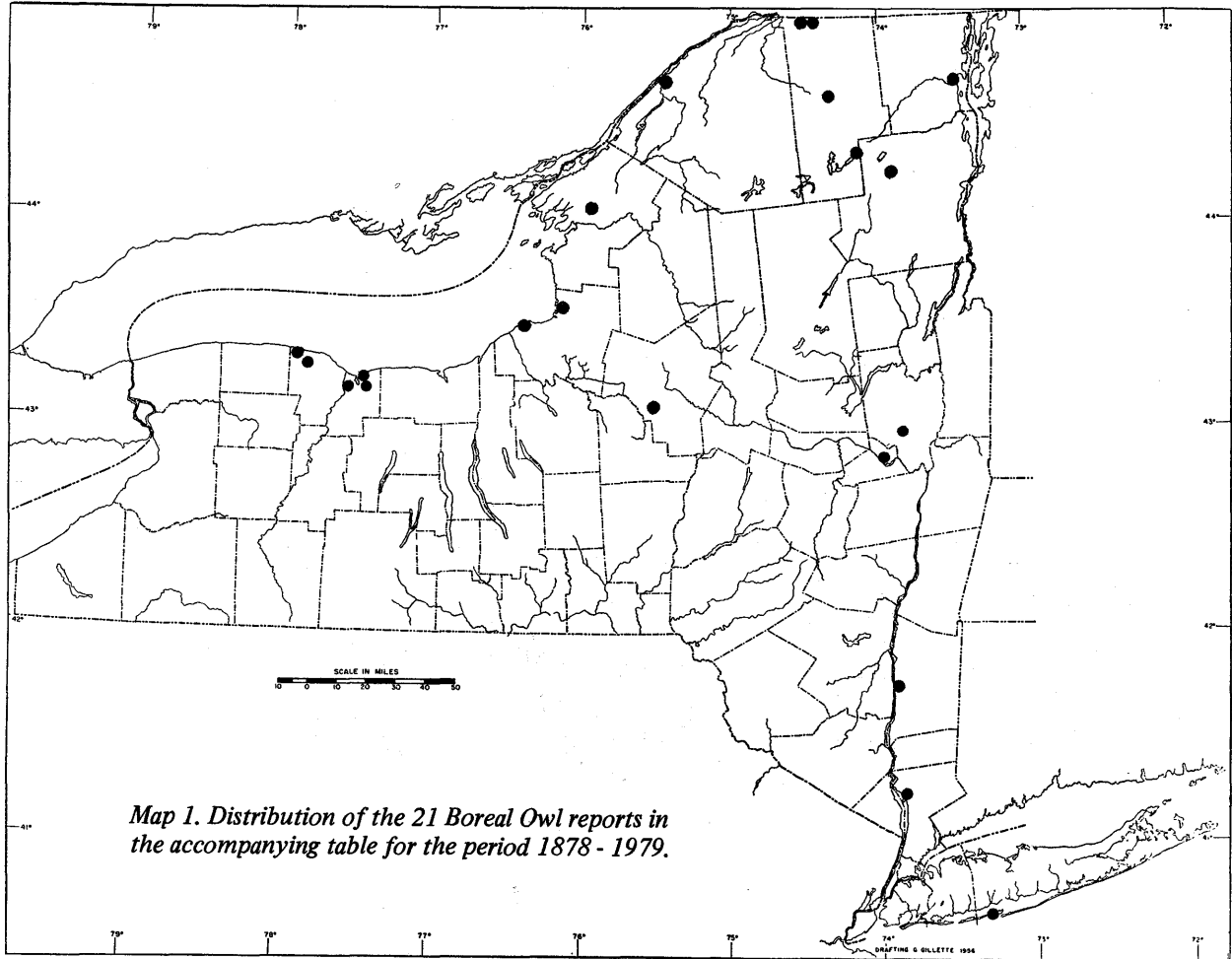


by Parkes (1952) and rejected by Bull (1974). The Dutchess County and second Oswego County records were not referred to by Bull (1974, 1976). In 1974 Bull referred to nine specimens of this species. I am able to locate records of eight of these, but not the ninth and for that reason it is not included in any of the totals referred to here.

To make the species' recorded history as complete as possible, I would appreciate hearing from persons who know of verified reports in regional club publications, or newspapers. Also, it would be valuable to know of the existence of any specimens in private collections or small regional museums that are not mentioned here.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

The following persons provided valuable assistance with records verification and sighting reports, and are gratefully acknowledged: Rollin Bauer, John B. Belknap, John Bull, Frank A. Clinch, Ronald LaForce, William Lee, Kenneth C. Parkes, E. M. Reilly, Jr., and Walton B. Sabin.



## SUMMARY OF NEW YORK STATE BOREAL OWL REPORTS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1	Winter 1878	Franklin Co.	Stoner (1945), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962)	Collected by Dr. William N. Mac- Artney, Jr., specimen where- abouts unknown.
2	Feb. 1893	Hecla Works (Lowell), Oneida Co.	Eaton (1914), Parkes (1952)	Collected by J. S. Allwood, NYSM 1144; however, specimen missing since 1976; could not be found Sept. 1979
3	mid-Dec. 1896	North Elba, Essex Co.	Eaton (1914), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962)	Collected by Ezra Cornell, Jr. Specimen whereabouts unknown.
4	14 Nov. 1914	Ft. Covington, Franklin Co.	Miller (1915), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962), Bull (1974)	Collected by Dr. MacArtney, AMNH 126935. Miller's date of 14 Nov. conflicts with Bull's date of 16 Nov. which is the date on the specimen.
5	19 Jan. 1916	Ft. Covington, Franklin Co.	Stoner (1945), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962), Bull (1974)	Collected by Dr. MacArtney, AMNH 120290.
6	16 Dec. 1922	Plattsburgh, Clinton Co.	Bishop (1923), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962), Bull (1974)	Collected by Lt. L. R. Wolfe, NYSM 9467.
7	Dec. 1922	Saranac Lake, Franklin Co.	Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962), Bull (1974)	Collected by Charles Dickert, CUM 3505, formerly Fuertes Collection, LAF 3463.
8	12 Feb. 1951	Croton Point, Westchester Co.	Komorowski (1951), Parkes (1952), Rusk (1962), Bull (1964)	An unverified sighting of one hour duration at 15 ft. by Rose and Mayer.

## SUMMARY OF NEW YORK STATE BOREAL OWL REPORTS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Comment</u>
9	13 Mar. 1958	Ogdensburg, St. Lawrence Co.	Clinch (1958), Bull (1974), Belknap (1979)	Found dead by Charles H. Maywood, Jr. after hit by car, NYSM 19022.
10	11 Dec. 1960	Hyde Park, Dutchess Co.	Hough (1961), Rusk (1962)	An unverified sight report at a conifer plantation by Walter Clare, Jr.
11	17-18 Mar. 1962	Pulaski, Oswego Co.	Rusk (1962), Post (1965), Bull (1974)	Live/photograph, seen by several observers.
12	22-29 Feb. 1964	Hamlin St. Park, Monroe Co.	Foster (1964), Miller (1964), Post (1965), Bull (1974)	Live/photograph, seen by several observers.
13	24-26 Feb. 1965	near Webster, Monroe Co.	Kemnitzer (1965, 1965a), Bull (1974)	Live/photograph, seen by several observers.
14	21 Nov. 1965	Nine-mile Pt., Oswego Co.	Rusk (1966)	Live sighting of about one hour at 12 ft. by M. S. Rusk with prior experience with this species, otherwise unverified.
15	2 Feb. 1969	Philadelphia, Jefferson Co.	Clinch (1969), Bull (1976)	Found dead/emaciated by J. B. Belknap, specimen at Wellesley Is. Nature Center on exhibit.
16	26 Feb. 1972	Hamlin, Monroe Co.	O'Hara (1972), Bull (1976)	Found dead, given to Neil Moon, specimen in Rochester Museum of Science.

## SUMMARY OF NEW YORK STATE BOREAL OWL REPORTS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Comment</u>
17	15 Jan. 1975	Cedar Beach, Suffolk Co.	Feustel (1975), McGuinness (1975), Bull (1976)	Found dead along highway by Kenneth Feustel, AMNH 821687.
18	4-6 Feb. 1978	Durand Eastman Pk, Rochester, Monroe Co.	Spahn (1978)	Live/photograph, seen by several observers.
19	26 Dec. 1978	Saratoga Springs, Saratoga Co.	This paper & Guthrie (1979)	Live/photograph by David Smith, verified by Robert P. Yunick.
20	5 Feb. 1979	Glenville, Schenectady Co.	This paper & Guthrie (1979)	Found dead/emaciated by J. H. MacTaggart, specimen in NYSM as NYSM 35251.
21	3-6 Mar. 1979	Northrup Creek, Monroe Co.	Dial-A-Bird reports and Spahn (1979)	Live/photograph, seen by several observers after found by Mike Carlson.

Note: Since Number 9 has been previously reported as being from Deferiet near Ogdensburg, the following information from Belknap (pers. comm.) appears worthy of mention. The bird flew into the open window of a car near Ogdensburg. It was discarded by the driver at Deferiet about 60 miles away where Maywood, when he learned of it, retrieved the bird.

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*1527 Myron Street, Schenectady, New York 12309*

## PROTHONOTARY WARBLER BREEDING ON LONG ISLAND

MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

After a number of years in which male Prothonotary Warblers (*Protonotaria citrea*) have been found singing during the month of June, the first nesting of the species on Long Island has been confirmed. The first sighting occurred on 6 June, 1979, when a male was discovered singing at the Nissequogue River State Park in Smithtown, Suffolk County, by Park Naturalist Gregory Mertz and the writer. Mr. Mertz saw the bird fly to a hole in a stump; thereafter we saw both a male and a female make repeated visits to this hole. On 10 June I saw the adults feeding two young in the nest, and on 12 June, Adrian Dignan and I visited the site and again saw two young. Mr. Dignan returned on 13 June to photograph the birds; his photographs later revealed that there were three young. On 16 June the young were no longer in the nest, although the adults still made occasional visits to the nest-hole. At this point, we wondered whether the young had actually fledged or had been victims of a predator, but on 18 June Richard Houghton saw an adult Prothonotary feeding one newly fledged young bird, and a few days later, Park Naturalist Jack Cahill saw two young being fed.

On 12 September I returned to the site and made some measurements. The lip of the cavity was three feet, ten inches from the base of the stump; the cavity was three inches wide and four inches high; the depth of the cavity from the lip was three inches. The stump was that of a red maple (*Acer rubrum*), according to Mr. Cahill. The nest itself consisted of grass, strips of purplish bark, perhaps of fox grape, (*Vitis labrusca*), short pieces of very thin twigs or stems with tiny, crumbly seed-pods, and small, dry pieces of sphagnum moss. Edgar M. Reilly, Jr. (1968, *Audubon Illustrated Handbook of American Birds*, p. 399) describes the nest of this species as being made of "mosses and lined with grape bark, rootlets, and fine grasses; built in cavities or holes in trees or stumps 3-30 ft. above the ground, but generally below 10 ft." The nest was in an eight-foot stump that leaned out from the bank of a quiet stretch of water leading to a quarter-acre fishing pond; part of the base of the stump was submerged. The low banks of this narrow stretch were lined with sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*) which were crowded around the stump. In the immediate vicinity were two red maples with four-inch trunks, one red maple with a one-and-a-half-inch trunk, a black oak (*Quercus velutina*) of the same size and a slender young tupelo





*Prothonotary Warbler at Nest Hole, Smithtown, Suffolk Co.*  
June 13, 1979 *Adrian J. Dignan*

(*Nyssa sylvatica*). These trees and shrubs provided good cover from the bank, while the nest-hole faced obliquely over the water, easily accessible to the adults.

This first breeding record for Long Island had been anticipated for several years. A singing male was recorded at Manorville, Suffolk County, on 10-11 June, 1961. Barbara Spencer discovered a singing male at Mill Neck, Nassau County, on 1 June, 1969, and again on 5 June, 1976, in an area of streams, red maples, and tupelos. In Spring, 1979, a male and a female were observed at Manorville, according to David Larsen; these birds disappeared and are not known to have nested. There are other such sightings on Long Island.

The Prothonotary Warbler is a southern species that has been extending its range to the north. According to John Bull (1974, *Birds of New York State*, p. 464), the species was not reported with any regularity in the state until the 1920's and 1930's. The first nesting record was in 1931 at Old Orchard Swamp, near Alabama, Genesee County, where there is now a "permanent colony" of the species. Other such colonies listed by Bull are at the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in Seneca and Cayuga counties and at Oneida Lake in Onondaga County.

*333 Bedell Street, Freeport, New York 11520*

## NEW YORK STATE WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 1979

WALTON B. SABIN

This year's Federation Waterfowl Count period, from January 6 to January 14, 1979, was about as cold as 1978 but with extremes of warmth in the week preceding the period and of cold toward the end of the period. The earlier part of the count period was the best for counting waterfowl provided there was no snowstorm to interfere. As usual many, if not most, of the smaller inland lakes, ponds and streams were frozen over. Lake Erie again was frozen except for Dunkirk Harbor and an occasional open lead through loose ice. By contrast there was very little ice along the Lake Ontario shore west of Fair Haven. The larger Finger Lakes were also open. The total count this year was up 39.4% over 1978 to 181,116.

The Department of Environmental Conservation mid-winter aerial waterfowl survey was conducted between January 4 and January 19, 1979 with a total count of 110,276, or a 20.8% decrease from 1978, and 42.7% below the long term average. The marked decrease is attributed to low numbers for Black Ducks and scaup, and to a lesser extent, Common Goldeneyes and Redheads. These decreases were offset only slightly by higher counts for Canada Geese and scoters.

Unlike 1978, the 1979 counts show little similarity. In twelve of the fourteen species listed in the first table the ground count showed significantly higher totals than the aerial count by at least 33.3% in the case of Black Ducks, up to 498.3% for coots. Only two species groups showed up less on the ground count compared to the aerial count. These were the scoters and the mergansers. This deviation may possibly be explained by the capability of the aircraft to locate scoters on Long Island Sound or the Atlantic Ocean, beyond the range of shore-based ground observers, or mergansers between Niagara Falls and Lake Erie. Only in the case of Mallards, American Wigeon, Oldsquaw and scoters do we find population trends moving in the same direction in the two counts. The one species trending downwards, Oldsquaw, showed a decline of around 60% from 1978. The other three species, Mallard, American Wigeon and scoters, show increases over 1978 but not in very close agreement between counts. All other species show opposing trends between counts. It is not clear why there are so many discrepancies between the results of the two counts.

In checking federal figures for the Atlantic Flyway, which extends from Maine to Florida, total waterfowl numbers were 4.7% above last year. Diving ducks, sea ducks (scoters, eiders and Oldsquaws), geese and swans all showed increases over 1978, except for Redheads (36.6% decrease) and Buffleheads (20.5% decrease). Dabbling ducks, with the exception of Gadwalls, showed a 6.2% decrease, as a group, over 1978. Black Ducks decreased 12.3% from last year, when the flyway population was very close to the 10-year average.

A listing of the most abundant species, by ground count and aerial survey, comparing 1978 with 1979, and giving the percent change between the two years for each count, is given below.

	<u>UP STATE</u>			
	<u>AERIAL</u>		<u>GROUND</u>	
	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Canada Goose	8,911	9,946	5,458	22,581
Brant	0	0	0	0
Mallard	2,173	2,940	11,183	11,298
Black Duck	4,178	2,731	2,410	3,228
American Wigeon	0	60	22	79
Redhead	1,830	1,827	5,788	3,939
Canvasback	2,890	2,154	2,919	3,606
Scaup (both)	10,981	7,858	6,329	6,152
Com. Goldeneye	6,730	2,352	11,284	10,593
Bufflehead	64	182	1,033	990
Oldsquaw	1,119	498	3,469	225
Scoters (all 3)	146	0	27	109
Mergansers (all 3)	30,742	14,896	7,609	9,523
American Coot	249	85	1,194	119
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>70,013</b>	<b>45,529</b>	<b>58,725</b>	<b>72,442</b>

LONG ISLAND

	<u>AERIAL</u>		<u>GROUND</u>	
	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Canada Goose	5,587	4,139	8,482	9,792
Brant	8,936	8,211	3,218	17,677
Mallard	2,433	3,478	5,704	8,194
Black Duck	14,637	10,314	8,680	14,159
American Wigeon	116	784	1,970	2,299
Redhead	0	60	89	209
Canvasback	1,920	2,071	3,615	4,251
Scaup (both)	25,730	14,918	25,316	27,026
Com. Goldeneye	1,459	1,418	1,040	1,637
Bufflehead	2,025	1,115	2,156	3,274
Oldsquaw	493	185	532	1,273
Scoters (all 3)	1,440	14,365	3,951	8,629
Mergansers (all 3)	3,774	2,828	3,448	2,104
American Coot	46	153	141	1,305
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>68,596</b>	<b>64,039</b>	<b>68,342</b>	<b>101,829</b>

TOTALS

	<u>AERIAL</u>		<u>% change</u>	<u>GROUND</u>		<u>% change</u>
	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>from 1978</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>from 1978</u>
Canada Goose	14,498	14,085	-- 2.8	13,940	32,373	+132.2
Brant	8,936	8,211	-- 8.1	3,218	17,677	+449.3
Mallard	4,606	6,418	+ 39.3	16,887	19,492	+ 15.4
Black Duck	18,815	13,045	-- 30.7	11,090	17,387	+ 56.8
American Wigeon	116	844	+627.6	1,992	2,378	+ 19.4
Redhead	1,830	1,887	+ 3.1	5,877	4,148	-- 29.4
Canvasback	4,810	4,225	-- 12.1	6,534	7,857	+ 20.2
Scaup (both)	36,711	22,776	-- 38.0	31,645	33,178	+ 4.8
Com. Goldeneye	8,189	3,770	-- 54.0	12,324	12,230	-- 0.8
Bufflehead	2,089	1,297	-- 37.9	3,189	4,264	+ 33.7
Oldsquaw	1,612	683	-- 57.6	4,001	1,498	-- 62.6
Scoters (all 3)	1,586	14,365	+805.7	3,978	8,738	+119.7
Mergansers (all 3)	34,516	17,724	-- 48.6	11,057	11,627	+ 5.2
American Coot	295	238	-- 19.3	1,335	1,424	+ 6.7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>138,609</b>	<b>109,568</b>	<b>-- 21.0</b>	<b>127,067</b>	<b>174,271</b>	<b>+ 37.1</b>

**GROUND SURVEY BY REGIONS—JANUARY 1979**  
**FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS**

Species	REGION										TOTAL
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	
Common Loon	1		6		5		1			117	130
Red-throated Loon										15	15
Red-necked Grebe							2			1	3
Horned Grebe		2	30		13		4			221	270
Pied-billed Grebe	2		6		3				2	57	70
Great Cormorant										74	74
Double-crested Cormorant										27	27
Mute Swan		1							49	815	865
Whistling Swan		1								5	6
Canada Goose	2,339		18,927		391	2	128	10	756	9,820	32,373
Brant										17,677	17,677
Snow Goose									1	11	12
Mallard	4,045	2,020	2,015	104	1,258	53	52	442	1,211	8,292	19,492
Black Duck	632	68	777	3	190	89	180	230	563	14,655	17,387
Gadwall	18		44		28				3	433	526
Common Pintail	14		2		1					220	237
Green-winged Teal		1	1		1					138	141
Eurasian Wigeon										1	1
American Wigeon	67		3		1		1		2	2,304	2,378
Northern Shoveler										109	109
Wood Duck	4		5		2				4	29	44
Redhead	51	1	3,838		46	3				209	4,148
Ring-necked Duck			3		1					64	68
Canvasback	1,038		758		87	1	15		60	5,898	7,857

**GROUND SURVEY BY REGIONS—JANUARY 1979**  
**FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS**

Species	REGION										TOTAL
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	
Greater Scaup	1,783	83	4		1,053		1			238	3,162
Lesser Scaup		1			1		3			332	337
Scaup Duck, sp.			1,387	1						31,790	33,178
Common Goldeneye	4,755	2,489	526	8	1,613	520	487	1	20	1,811	12,230
Barrow's Goldeneye	1						1			1	3
Bufflehead	301	92	242		95		12		3	3,519	4,264
Oldsquaw	13	113			98					1,274	1,498
Harlequin Duck										1	1
Common Eider										76	76
King Eider										2	2
White-winged Scoter	3	102			3					3,381	3,489
Surf Scoter					1					967	968
Black Scoter										1,740	1,740
Ruddy Duck					2				44	286	332
Hooded Merganser	4		78		3				33	278	396
Common Merganser	4,835	2,148	117	76	710	1,020	163	43	233	1	9,346
Red-breasted Merganser	16	3	17		8					1,841	1,885
American Coot	7	2	99		2				9	1,305	1,424
Mallard x Black Duck			15		1					10	26
Duck, sp.			201		106						307
Scoter, sp.										2,541	2,541
Common Gallinule										1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>19,929</b>	<b>7,127</b>	<b>29,101</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>5,723</b>	<b>1,688</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>2,993</b>	<b>112,587</b>	<b>181,116</b>

**TABLE SHOWING % DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN SURVEYS—1979**

	Aerial Survey	%	Numerical Difference	%	Ground Survey
Canada Goose	14,085	--56.5	18,288	+129.8	32,373
Brant	8,211	--53.5	9,466	+115.3	17,677
Mallard	6,418	--67.1	13,074	+203.7	19,492
Black Duck	13,045	--25.0	4,342	+ 33.3	17,387
American Wigeon	844	--64.5	1,534	+181.8	2,378
Redhead	1,887	--54.5	2,261	+119.8	4,148
Canvasback	4,225	--46.2	3,632	+ 86.0	7,857
Scaup (both)	22,776	--31.4	10,402	+ 45.7	33,178
Common Goldeneye	3,770	--69.2	8,460	+224.4	12,230
Bufflehead	1,297	--69.6	2,967	+228.8	4,264
Oldsquaw	683	--54.4	815	+119.3	1,498
Scoters (all 3)	14,365	+64.4	5,627	-- 39.2	8,738
Mergansers (all 3)	17,724	+52.4	6,097	-- 34.4	11,627
American Coot	238	--83.3	1,186	+498.3	1,424
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>109,568</b>	<b>--37.1</b>	<b>64,703</b>	<b>+ 59.1</b>	<b>174,271</b>

**AERIAL SURVEY—JANUARY 1979**  
**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

	<u>Upstate</u>	<u>Long Island*</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Mute Swan	107	471	578
Whistling Swan	4	0	4
Canada Goose	9,946	4,139	14,085
Brant	0	8,211 (1,176)	8,211
Black Duck	2,731	10,314 ( 239)	13,045
Mallard	2,940	3,478 ( 73)	6,418
Gadwall	0	1 ( 1)	1
Pintail	0	35 ( 35)	35
Green-winged Teal	0	90	90
American Wigeon	60	784 ( 74)	844
Redhead	1,827	60	1,887
Canvasback	2,154	2,071 ( 81)	4,225
Scaup (both)	7,858	14,918 (1,398)	22,776
Common Goldeneye	2,352	1,418 ( 5)	3,770
Bufflehead	182	1,115 ( 156)	1,297
Oldsquaw	498	185	683
Scoters (all 3)	0	14,365	14,365
Mergansers (all 3)	14,896	2,828 ( 3)	17,724
American Coot	85	153 ( 3)	238
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>45,640</b>	<b>64,636 (3,244)</b>	<b>110,276</b>

\* Includes Staten Island.

Figures in ( ) = ground survey figures for Jamaica Bay, included in totals.

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
Region 2—Warren Lloyd	Region 7—John M. C. Peterson
Region 3—John Confer	Region 8—Dr. Paul Grattan
Region 4—Leslie E. Bemont	Region 9—Edward D. Treacy
Region 5—Dr. Fritz G. Scheider	Region 10—Stephen B. Dempsey

The 1980 waterfowl count period will be from January 5 through January 13, 1980 with January 6th as the target date.

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

(This Bibliography was prepared under the chairmanship of Sally Hoyt Spof-  
ford, who has now given up that position; Allen H. Benton is her successor. The  
Federation is greatly indebted to Mrs. Spofford for her many years of able  
work in producing these useful annual Bibliographies. —Eds.)

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON

ROBERT F. ANDRLE

Vivian Pitzrick, Editor of Region One, remarks that many birders retire their binoculars and miss one of the most exciting times of year, the nesting season. As one who has usually been active in the field during this time, I can agree that it is most interesting and stimulating. This summer was also marked by observers noting an early return of migrant shorebirds in late June and some pronounced movements of warblers and other passerines commencing in July and early August. It really is a rewarding season for those who go afield.

Although there were expected variations statewide, June was generally dry with only light rainfall and some below-normal temperatures. July was on the dry and hot side, while August turned cool with variable, sometimes heavy rainfall and several cold fronts that triggered migration. Region One's breeding bird survey routes indicated that numbers of birds were holding up well. Wood Ducks, Ruffed Grouse and Turkeys had successful breeding seasons, Tree Swallows, Cliff Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds showed increases in the region, and Yellow-rumped Warblers were found in a new locality. Nineteen pairs of Eastern Phoebes with 12 pairs double-brooded, produced at least 81 fledglings with only eight nest failures in Allegheny County, reports the editor. She also tells of a Gray Catbird building a nest in late July with a Song Sparrow taking over, adding materials and fledging four young in late August!

Genesee region's annual breeding bird count in the Hemlock-Conesus Lake CBC circle showed very little change in numbers of species or individuals from last year. Among their more noteworthy findings was a confirmed nesting of Acadian Flycatchers, probable breeding of White-eyed Vireos and numerous reports of Orchard Orioles in Orleans County. A dramatic increase in gull numbers of three species on the west lakeshore was noted in late June (40,000 Ring-billed Gulls!), but the reason for this is not apparent to me. Ring-billed Gulls were also observed gleaning waste cherries on the wing from picked orchards in Region Two. Their Eared Grebe remained for two weeks with local ducks in late July and early August and the season's total of raptors at Braddock's Bay Hawk Lookout reached 34,846 with the addition of 3,628 birds in June, the bulk being immature Broad-winged Hawks.

Television towers continue their destruction of nocturnal migrants. In Region Three on August 27-28 more than 100 birds of 14 species hit a tower, involving mostly warblers but including five Yellow-bellied Flycatchers. High water-levels at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge excluded most shorebirds, though a Ruff appeared in early July. Four young Bald Eagles were raised successfully at towers on the refuge and birds fledged in previous years have been seen flying in the area. Noteworthy summer nests in the region were of Alder Flycatcher, Fish Crow and Hooded Warbler; a pair of White-eyed Vireos was carrying food and a pair of Kentucky Warblers was found with a fledgling nearby.

No report was received from Region Four up to time of writing.

Shorebird migrant habitat is perennially changeable. The editor for Region Five commented on the dry spell creating mud flats for them, the absence of immatures, and increasing human disturbance of such areas. There were impressive numbers of early migrating vireos, warblers and flycatchers in the region. Wilson's Phalaropes totaled 12 for the period and four light-phase Parasitic Jaegers were seen at Derby Hill August 25. Seven regions reported Bald Eagles, St. Lawrence reporting four as well as excellent shorebird records and a rare Loggerhead Shrike nest.

Adirondack-Champlain region workers banded 56 Black-crowned Night Herons on Four Brothers Islands. Three pairs of Cattle Egrets with eggs or young were there, as well as two Snowy Egrets with no evidence of breeding. July 18 was a very early start for the first fall migrants in Region Eight, including some recently fledged Swainson's Thrushes. The editor notes widespread repopulation of Turkeys and the spreading practice of early June mowing of hayfields likely contributing to the decline of grassland sparrows. Both species of cuckoos were reported to be more numerous than usual in Regions Eight, Nine and Ten.

Of interest was the wandering Black Vulture reported at Bashakill in Region Nine on June 10. Despite high water levels, there was a good appearance of shorebirds, including first county records of Marbled Godwit and American Avocet. A bluebird nest box project had considerable success with triple broods in three boxes and two pairs raising 12 young each. Hackensack Swamp unfortunately received millions of gallons of raw sewage from a ruptured line and two Prothonotary Warblers which might have bred there disappeared after that.

Region Ten reported relatively poor Osprey nesting success on Gardiner's Island owing to chick mortality from heavy rains in May, although Plum Island birds were more successful. Six hundred Least Tern chicks were banded at Eaton's Neck, the largest known breeding colony on the eastern seaboard. The Long Island breeding bird surveys yielded Chuck-will's-widow, three Acadian Flycatchers, four Brown Creepers, Kentucky and Hooded Warblers; Rusty Blackbird, two Summer Tanagers and Blue Grosbeak were also of interest on these surveys. A pair of Prothonotary Warblers bred successfully in Nissequogue. Region Ten's rarities included four Magnificent Frigatebirds on June 30 and August 11, 21 & 28 in various localities, two White-faced Ibises at Jamaica Bay, 11 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks on the south shore, one Swallow-tailed Kite June 12 at Great Neck, the previously reported two Mississippi Kites last seen June 9 on Staten Island, two Sandwich Terns August 9 at Mecox and subsequently, and Boat-tailed Grackles probably nesting on Pearsall's Hassock.

The editor of Region Ten correctly warns that year-to-year gains or losses should not be over-interpreted as they may only be short-term phenomena in a relatively stable environment. Also of interest are the reports on a colonial bird survey of the marsh islands of Hempstead Bay, and Cox's Ledge pelagic trips (Yellow-nosed Albatross August 21), though the latter is now officially not in New York, and, as the previous Highlights editor commented, should not be included in reports.

Some of the rarer species reported in addition to those mentioned earlier are Yellow-crowned Night Heron in Region Two, White Pelican in Region Three, Saw-whet Owl in Region Two, Worm-eating Warbler in Region Two, Yellow-throated Warbler in Region Nine, Western Meadowlark and Yellow-headed Blackbird in Region Two.

A wealth of information is incorporated into these regional reports by hard-working editors, and one can only select from many items of interest or significance. Indeed, the summer season provides a fascinating combination of breeding, migrant and vagrant bird reports that make it at least the equal of any other season for stimulation and knowledge.

## REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

VIVIAN MILLS PITZRICK

Hampered by the notion that binoculars should be retired on the first of June until the fall migration, many birders miss one of the most exciting times of year, the nesting season. To the hooked nest-finder, each documented nest is a triumph, each fledgling a miracle, and in addition, the accumulated information is valuable to the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University for its nest-record program.

Grasses already stunted from the dry spring were discouraged by a cool, dry June when many mornings were cold and frost occurred locally the 12th, 25th and 26th. Some lake levels continued low. July, with frequent showers and electrical storms, was relatively warm and wet. However, August, colder than normal by 1.2° F (.7° C), was confusing, with precipitation varying across the Region. At Wellsville and Buffalo, rainfall was near normal, but at Olean, the 4+ in. (10.2 cm.) made this the wettest August in 37 years. On the 7th in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties, a tornado hit the former, and flash floods struck them both. In several places temperatures dropped below 40° F (4.4° C) the 17th, and during the night of the 29th, more flash floods stunned Buffalo areas.

More than usual infestation of nesting boxes by blood-sucking larvae was noted by one observer. Although no bluebirds were lost to them because of careful monitoring, several Tree Swallow nestlings were, and cocoons from the larvae were also found in a Barn Swallow's and a phoebe's nest after the young fledged. Your Region 1 editor would appreciate further statistics on this problem.

Findings from 17 out of 19 routes of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) indicate numbers holding up well. However, absent for the first time ever were the Common Snipe, Upland Sandpiper, Hermit Thrush and Grasshopper Sparrow. Results of 15 of the 17 routes of the Allegany Co. "Mini Run" Breeding Bird Survey (Abbs) were also near normal. Here, the Marsh Hawk was unrecorded for the first time in nine years. Below, status for a species is abbreviated as: H+ or L- = highest or lowest ever, or tied, H or L = above or below average, sd+ or sd- = above or below one standard deviation, and S = stable.

Summer positives include 1) an excellent fruit crop with Red Oak and Beech plentiful but cone and Black Cherry spotty; 2) Great Blue and Green Herons doing well; 3) splendid Canada Goose and Wood Duck brood production, and more Hooded Mergansers than usual; 4) fair reports of the Turkey Vulture and good numbers of the Broad-winged Hawk; 5) a successful breeding season for the Ruffed Grouse and Turkey; 6) encouraging numbers of the Upland Sandpiper; 7) a steady population of the Common Nighthawk and Ruby-throated Hummingbird; 8) most flycatchers gaining following the setback from two successive wicked winters; 9) a population explosion for the Tree Swallow, and Cliff Swallows showing improvement in numbers, the latter now using overpasses and bridges of the Southern Tier Expressway for nesting sites (Meyer); 10) several summering Red-breasted Nuthatches; House Wrens gaining slowly, and a bear-wren story; 11) a delightful Eastern Bluebird season; 12) continued depletion of

Starlings, House Sparrows and grackles; 13) Warbling Vireos and Yellow Warblers doing fine and Yellow-rumped Warblers expanding their range; 14) modest growth in Eastern Meadowlark and House Finch numbers; 15) more Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows, good counts of the White-throated Sparrow and a neat Song Sparrow-Catbird tale.

Negatives for the season are 1) continued low numbers of Great Egrets, American Bitterns and Black Ducks; 2) fewer Red-tailed Hawks and local scarcity of American Kestrels—two species to be watched; a low Marsh Hawk population; 3) steady decline of the Ring-necked Pheasant and reduced numbers of the Killdeer, American Woodcock and Spotted Sandpiper; 4) dearth of owl reports—none of the Screech Owl; 5) lower numbers of the Chimney Swift, Common Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Rough-winged Swallow and Blue Jay, and continued scarcity of the Horned Lark; 6) little improvement for the Tufted Titmouse, nearly all wrens, (other than the House Wren), the Mockingbird or the Golden-crowned Kinglet; 7) no Loggerhead Shrikes; 8) few Black-and-white or Golden-winged Warblers and no Yellow-breasted Chats; 9) decline in the Cardinal population; 10) the Vesper Sparrow still in trouble, and reduced counts for the Field, Swamp and Song Sparrows.

Rarities include Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Bobwhite, Wilson's Phalarope, Northern Phalarope, Prothonotary Warbler, "Brewster's" Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Orchard Oriole and *Addenda* from spring: Wilson's Phalarope, Varied Thrush and Prothonotary Warbler.

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

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LOONS—DUCKS: A Com. Loon was recorded for the BBS, now the third time in late June. Another was seen in Allegany SP June 2, and one, first for fall, arr at Chautauqua L Aug. 19. A bird at Beaver Meadow June 8 and another at Tonawanda WMA Aug. 12 were the only reports of the Great Egret, but seven Black-crowned Night Herons appeared near Buffalo during July and Aug., and one immature was found in Hume Twp. July 28 (KP), an unusual area. The only Am. Bitterns discovered were two on the BBS (H). In addition to the nesting pair of Canada Geese at Farmersville Sta., five pairs produced at least 15 yg. in n. Allegany Co. where on Aug. 1 the flock totaled about 50 birds. Duck sightings of special interest include: Gadwall, 25 at Iroquois NWR June 10; Am. Wigeon, four at Times Beach June 10 and up to four irregularly in Buffalo areas during July and Aug.; Ring-necked Duck, one, very late, all summer at Forest Lawn Cemetery (DF+); Wood Duck, max report: 35 yg. in Hume Twp. June 9 from ten pairs of ad; Com. Merganser, two near Belmont June 15 for the Abbs, two consecutive years; and Red-breasted Merganser, three at Lakeside Beach SP June 10 and one at Times Beach Aug. 19.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Again tragedy accompanied some hawk nestings. Of GOSHAWK

nests, two were abandoned and two produced a total five yg. A Cooper's Hawk pair successfully fledged four yg. Of seven Red-shouldered Hawk nests, two females were found dead under their nests (cause of death undetermined), three were deserted and two produced a total of three yg. Only nine yg. Am. Kestrels were reported for the season. Outside its usual haunts was the Goshawk at Allenberg Bog Aug. 31 (Chapple). Numbers of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were down slightly with six of the former and seven of the latter, usually singles, at scattered locations. A BALD EAGLE adult was identified near Vandalia June 13 (MA). Only six Marsh Hawks, in addition to one on the BBS (S), and three Ospreys were noted for the season. An ad Ring-necked Pheasant with 16 yg. appeared at Times Beach July 9. Three Soras were found at Tift Farm July 12. A Killdeer nest with four eggs and ad was found July 26 (R. Brooks, EB), 22 days past the record final egg date for N.Y. State; the eggs hatched later the same day. Other noteworthy plover and sandpiper reports, all from S. Buffalo unless otherwise designated, include: Black-bellied Plover, one Aug. 14 and three at Clarence Aug. 29; Upland Sandpiper, a total of nine birds from six areas; Willet, one Aug. 26; Lesser Yellowlegs, max 100 Aug. 10; Red Knot, one July 30; Pectoral Sandpiper, two Aug. 2; Dunlin, one, late, June 20 (MZ); Short-billed Dowitcher, two, early, June 28 (RA, MF), max 24, also early, July 2 and 3 (RA, MF), and max four Aug. 2 and 14 (DF); Stilt Sandpiper, one to two irregularly July 12 to Aug. 14; Sanderling, two at Cuba L June 6 and seven (ASc), rare away from Great Lakes areas; WILSON'S PHALAROPE, one Aug. 19 and 20 (DF, RA, Byron), and NORTHERN PHALAROPE, one, early, Aug. 14 (DF). Noteworthy larids were: a Franklin's Gull at Buffalo Harbor Aug. 21, 28; max two, Little Gulls at LaSalle Park Aug. 15-20; Forster's Tern, one at Buffalo Aug. 11; and Caspian Tern, two at Olcott June 10 and one at Times Beach Aug. 26.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** A Ruby-throated Hummingbird nest at Amity L June 23 (Wilcove, VP+) fledged two yg. A Hamburg pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers produced two yg. in June (MZ) and a total of 15 birds was reported from nine locations during the summer. Nesting Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found in Farmersville SF (DC) and at Birdsall (RA+), and four birds appeared at Cuba L during late July and mid-Aug. (ASc).

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** In Amity and Scio Twps. 19 pairs of the E. Phoebe, with 12 pairs nesting twice, produced at least 81 fledglings, with only eight nesting failures (VP). In Quaker Run, Allegany SP, there were only four second nestings, a drop from about 30 in 1976 (SE). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen in E. Amherst Aug. 10 (DF+). A pair of Tree Swallows nested late at Buttons' Pond in Amity Twp, having four eggs July 11 and 18 and one nestling July 28 to Aug. 10; this nesting was later by 19 days for the eggs and by 27 days for the nestling than the previous N.Y. State record; the yg. bird fledged successfully (VP). Purple Martins, too, broke the N.Y. State record with two pairs still feeding nestlings at Nicholson's on Riverview Hghts., Wellsville, Aug. 31—16 days record-late (EL). One to two Tufted Titmice were seen at Limestone July 13 thru Aug. 28 (RV, JV), the only report. A House Wren nest box at Saunders' Pond, Amity Twp, with six noisy nestlings Aug. 8 was discovered the 15th with post broken off, the sturdy box ripped apart and nestlings gone (VP). On Sept. 4 the Dept. of Environmental Conservation trapped a 150 lb. black bear here at the pond! Other less dramatic but interesting wren reports include: Winter Wren, singles on the BBS (H), at Little Valley June 17 and in S. Wales July 18; Carolina Wren, singles at Lewiston July 15 and near Wellsville July 31; and Short-billed Marsh Wren, one at Somerset June 10. Seven Mockingbirds were tallied from four locations. In Allegany Co., 17 pairs of the E. Bluebird produced at least 70 fledglings from 22 nestings, and in Cattaraugus Co., the two nestings reported fledged eight yg.; a total of seven other individuals was found in five areas. A single Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was in Hume Twp. Aug. 15 (KP). Up to two Golden-crowned Kinglets near Alfred during June and July were seen with yg. Aug. 3 (EB), and two were also found late at McCarty Hill June 17 (RA+).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Three areas reported one to two Yellow-throated Vireos during June, and a single Philadelphia Vireo visited E. Amherst Aug. 25. Worthy warbler notes in-

clude: PROTHONOTARY WARBLER, one at Iroquois NWR June 3, 10 (AM, WM, DF); Blue-winged Warbler, three fledglings in Amity Twp, June 11 (VP), five days earlier than the previous N.Y. State records; "BREWSTER'S" WARBLER (hybrid), one on the BBS (H+) and one in Amity Twp. June 22 (VP, MP); N. Parula, one, late, in Allegany SP June 17 (RA+); Yellow-rumped Warbler, four at McCarty Hill, late, June 16 (RA+), four nests found in old breeding territory near Alfred (EB), and discovery of three active nests in a new area, on Reddy Rd., Amity Twp. (VP); Cerulean Warbler, three in Iroquois NWR and two in Allenberg Bog in June; Pine Warbler, one with food for yg. and singing in mature Red Pine, Quaker Run, Allegany SP July 10 (SE); PRAIRIE WARBLER, one in E. Aurora June 5 (AM, Ruhls, AU), max four in Amity Twp through July 25 (VP, MP), and two active nests near Alfred in June, one predated, the other abandoned July 1 (EB).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: An ORCHARD ORIOLE was identified at Point Breeze June 10 (DF). The first Scarlet Tanager nest to be documented for Allegany Co. was found near Amity L, Amity Twp. 8.5 ft. up in a *Crataegus* with three nestlings June 17, but it failed due to predation (VP). Three late Evening Grosbeaks were tallied on the BBS. Three House Finches were found for the Abbs, a new species this year, and three yg. were noted at Egertsville during the summer (AM, WM). Single Pine Siskins stayed late at Amity L June 1 (VP, RP) and at Cuba L June 21 (ASc). From 89% of 26 Am. Goldfinch nests near Amity L, 101 yg. fledged successfully (VP)—good production for one area. Sparrow reports of special interest include: Grasshopper Sparrow, an ad. with yg. at Clarence July 27 plus 16 others counted from eight locations; Henslow's Sparrow, a max ten (!) at Clarence June 8 (DF) and five more totaled from four areas; Vesper Sparrow, one yg. at Charlotte June 24 (FR) and four other scattered singles; and White-throated Sparrow, nine on old breeding grounds near Alfred during June and July (EB). In late July a Gray Catbird was seen near Alfred Sta. carefully constructing her stick-nest; however, a Song Sparrow took it over, adding her own materials, and in late Aug. fledged four yg.! (EB).

*Addenda:* Among noteworthy records received too late for the spring report were: one very early WILSON'S PHALAROPE at Bethany May 28 (Kellor, Masons+); 1777 migrating Blue Jays near Hamburg May 8 (ARC, AS); a VARIED THRUSH in W. Seneca May 3 (Kitka); max two PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS in Iroquois NWR May 14 thru 23 (Daniels+); a single Yellow-breasted Chat in S. Buffalo May 8, 11 (O'Dell); and House Finches nesting in N. Buffalo, May 2, 7 (RA).

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

## REGION 2 — GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

Weatherwise, this season was a bit wetter and cooler than average; both highs and lows for each month averaged 1-2° F (1° C) below normal, June was pleasant with well-spaced rainfall on eight days and with two spells of cold nights, the second setting two record lows, which reduced the blood-sucking insect population to near zero to the benefit of human outdoor activities. The latter cold and lack of flying insects (June 23-26) may have adversely affected breeding birds with young nestlings at that point, otherwise it should have had little effect. July provided a good long hot spell, though again cooler than the peak heat of the past several years. Rainfall was again well-spaced and moderate until a very heavy storm on July 31. August saw the jet stream swing south, resulting in a series of



rapid frontal passages with good migrant birding after several of them. In summary, there were five nights with temperatures 50° F (10° C) or less, eight days with showers, and no really oppressively hot periods.

There was the usual summer decrease in observer activity aggravated to some extent by the gasoline shortage. Some of the farther afield areas of the Region received reduced coverage, e.g. the hill country south of Rochester, but Ontario lake plain coverage was increased with some exciting finds. There was sufficient activity in the Bristol Hills and Letchworth Park areas, including the second annual Breeding Bird Census in the Hemlock/Conesus CBC circle, to record again nearly all of the probable breeding birds of generally more northerly associations located in the past several breeding seasons. The census showed very little change in numbers of species or individuals over last year's count. The more intense lake plain birding resulted in, among other things: confirmed nesting of Acadian Flycatcher, probable attempted nesting of White-eyed Vireo, numerous reports of Orchard Oriole in the orchards of Orleans county, and another fuzzy, though fledged, immature Wilson's Phalarope, plus a number of unexpected vagrant reports and several very early fall migrants. All in all, the breeding season seemed to be very successful. The June dawn chorus was much improved over the past two years. With the several August frontal passages, fall migrant birding was good for those able to venture afield on the "right" days. However, shorebirding has been generally poor due to very limited habitat caused by high lake levels.

Among the seasonal trends, we find Mallard exploding with many double nestings, and by contrast, few pairs of nesting Black Duck. Other locally nesting waterfowl had a good breeding season, too, especially Wood Duck, Turkey continues to expand its breeding localities. Summer gull records boomed; a plus or a minus? A new feeding behavior was observed as Ring-billed Gulls were observed gleaning waste cherries on the wing from picked orchards. Is this a forewarning of a serious future agricultural problem? Additional positive notes were: Cedar Waxwings everywhere, an expanding Prairie Warbler colony above Honeoye Lake, the several lake plains breeding records noted above, and several good sized colonies of Henslow's Sparrow. The negative notes are mostly repeats of past lows: Black-crowned Night Heron, both bitterns, Ring-necked Pheasant, Common Nighthawk, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, and Vesper Sparrow. The *Empidonax* flycatchers were all down a bit on local breeding bird surveys, possibly only cyclically. Shorebird habitat is a continuing problem combining the effects of draining wet areas for agriculture and high water levels on Lake Ontario.

Rarities: Eared Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Mute Swan, Whimbrel, Willet, Franklin's Gull, Saw-whet Owl, Acadian Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Western Meadowlark, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

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

Observers: Bill Barlow, Jean Browning, Mike Carlson, Carolyn & Roger Cass, Julie Clafey, Roger Clark, Bob & Dottie Coffee, Bill Colzman, Mike Davids, Fritz Davis, Frank & Robert Dobson, Jeff & Joan Dodge, Jim & Kay Doris,\* Arlieen & John Foster, Genesee Ornithological Society, Bill Gorman, Kevin Griffith, Bill Hartranft, Robert & Sandra Hazen, Norm Henderson, Øivind Jensen, John Koopmans, Edith Lank, James Lenhard, David &

Jane Levy, Walter Listman, Warren Lloyd, Hayward Madden, Peg Magee,\* Frank & Mary Mattei, Robert & Margaret McKinney, Mike McKeon, Gordon Meade, Mike Menuhin, Hyde Miller, Ann Miranian,\* Laura & Neil Moon, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, Chip Perrigo, Pat Reister, Rochester Birding Association, Marge Schmale,\* Al & A. Shea, Dominic Sherony, Jeanne & Sharon Skelly, Robert & Susan Spahn, Ann Stear, Helen Steinhauser, Harriet Stride, Allen, Brian, Dan & David Strong, Mary Ann Sunderlin, Bill Symonds, Sarah Talpey, Steve Taylor, David, Mike & Tom Tetlow, Bob Thomen, Ann & Joe Watson, Eleanor Weld,\* Paul Weld, Kinsley Whittum, Munro Will, Doris Wilton,\* and Peter Zachmann. (\*=Tuesday Group).

**LOONS-DUCKS:** The lone loon record was Com. Loon: Canandaigua Lake July 25. A late migrant grebe was Horned Grebe: BB June 14. **EARED GREBE:** ad. in breeding plumage K July 28 thru Aug. 12 (RBA, mob), put in an unprecedented summer appearance contentedly dabbling away among the local ducks over a two-week period. Double-crested Cormorant was recorded sporadically thru the season in small numbers, one to three at BB, Heron records saw Great Blue Heron back to normal; Great Egret scattered thru the season in numbers of one to four in the BB and K areas; and Black-crowned Night Heron and both bitterns still scarce. There was a single report of **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON:** one imm. BB Aug. 1 (NH). The waterfowl picture included good breeding success by the usual local breeders and a few noteworthy additions including: **MUTE SWAN:** seven BB June 20 thru 26 (mob); and five BB Aug. 7 (TG); very few Black Ducks; Wood Duck: max 90 WL Aug. 25; Greater Scaup: one male BB Aug. 18-19; Com. Goldeneye: one ad. male Canandaigua L June 19 (HSte); possible Barrow's Goldeneye: imm. male BB June 25 (MD); Com. Merganser: 3 males LP June 2 (HM, TT); Red-breasted Merganser: one fem. BB June 25; and Ruddy Duck: one PB July 1 (CP).

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** The Braddock Bay Hawk Lookout was staffed thru June 30 with 3628 hawks added to bring the season's total to 34,846. June 10 was the last day with over 100 birds, though counts of up to about 50 Broad-winged Hawks were noted to the end. The bulk, 3413, of the June records were immature Broad-winged Hawks. Also of interest were: 107 Turkey Vultures; 31 Sharp-shinned Hawks; one Rough-legged Hawk; four Bald Eagles; 14 Marsh Hawks; 14 Ospreys; and one Peregrine Falcon: imm. June 10. Other seasonal raptors of note included: Goshawk: two nesting Honeoye Lake June 9 (RBA, GOS); and one Hamlin Aug. 5; a scattering of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawk records thru the season; the summer movement of migrants along the lakeshore with Red-tailed Hawk: max 133 WL Aug. 24; Red-shouldered Hawk: one imm. K Aug. 19; and one imm. BB Aug. 29; and Bald Eagle: one wing-tagged imm. Greece Aug. 30 (NH). Turkey was reported thriving with one large brood seen: 8 to 12 LP July 21. Rail records were too spotty to draw any conclusions on populations. While shorebird habitat was poor, there were a number of good records: Am. Golden Plover: max. 33 Aug. 24; **WHIMBREL:** one K July 4 (R & SH), very early; one K July 29 (CP, BS); and one K Aug. 5 (WLi, mob); Upland Sandpiper: eight Avon June 24; max 14 Carlton Aug. 9; and max 20 Monroe County Airport July 20; **WILLET:** five K Aug. 18 (CP); Lesser Yellowlegs: max 37 Canandaigua July 24; Red Knot: one Charlotte July 27, early; White-rumped Sandpiper: two Perinton July 29, early; Baird's Sandpiper: one Greece July 30, early; and Wilson's Phalarope: one fem. Perinton June 10 thru 12; one fem. K June 12; 1 to 3 PB Aug. 9 thru 26; and one imm. PB July 29 (RBA). Gull numbers increased dramatically in late June with large counts and a few rarities including: Great Black-backed Gull: 40 WL June 26 thru 28 (MD, BS); Herring Gull: 8000 WL June 28 (BS); Ring-billed Gull: 40,000 WL June 28 (BS); and 25,000 WL July 29 (CP, BS); **FRANKLIN'S GULL:** two ad PB June 25 (WLi, mob). While Black Tern appeared to have a good breeding season, peak numbers of the other tern species never reached the levels of the past several years. Forster's Tern was present thru, but peaked at ten BB July 28. Com. Tern peaked at eight and Caspian Tern at 21 BB Aug. 25.

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** Additional evidence for local breeding of **SAW-WHET OWL** was provided by: one juvenal Hamlin July 29 (JK), found dead along Lake Ontario

Parkway. Com. Nighthawk may be up a bit in numbers in Rochester, but still is very scarce. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one to two Cumming Nature Center June 9 thru 23, nested.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** The premiere event of this grouping was a confirmed nesting of **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER:** four ad., two building a nest, Bergen Swamp June 16 (KBA); two ad. & two yg. in nest Bergen Swamp July 7 (RBA); there were two additional migrant records: one IC June 1 (RS); and one BB June 3 (HM). Willow, Alder, and Least Flycatchers seemed a bit low from breeding bird counts, hopefully cyclically. Olive-sided Flycatcher appeared at the usual early June and late Aug. dates with an excellent count: five WL June 3 (MC, CP, HM). Bank Swallow: 5000+ BB July 23 thru 29, is typical of local concentrations of fall migrant swallows in both date and number. Carolina Wren was very low with only one reported: IC Aug. 19. Short-billed Marsh Wren was recorded at three locations: one Greece thru June 1; two Chili thru June, surely nested; and one to two BB June 25 thru July 1, breeding status unknown. Mockingbird reports were few. Early thrush returns were: Hermit Thrush: IC Aug. 8 (NH); Swainson's Thrush: IC July 29 thru 30 (NH); and Gray-cheeked Thrush: IC Aug. 28 (NH). E. Bluebird was a species incurring some losses due to the June cold spell—unfledged young found dead in nesting boxes. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was widely reported as a successful breeder, often in close association with Yellow-throated Vireo and Cerulean Warbler. Golden-crowned Kinglet was reported only from LP. Record early Ruby-crowned Kinglet migrants were: one Penfield (Thousand Acre Swamp) Aug. 14 (TG); and one WL Aug. 28 (TG), no details. Another unprecedented vagrant was Water Pipit: one BB June 28 (MD). Suggestive of nearby nesting among the orchards and hedgerows was Loggerhead Shrike: one PB June 11 thru 13 (WLi); four PB July 5 (WLi); and two PB Aug. 18 (CP).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Most exciting was the location of **WHITE-EYED VIREO:** two, male & fem., near BB June 3 thru 25 (CP, mob), in ideal nesting habitat, though no concrete evidence of nesting success was found. Solitary Vireo was recorded as a probable breeder in Bergen Swamp as well as at the higher elevations south of Rochester. Twenty-three species of warblers were reported as at least possibly breeding in the Region with the most interesting: Nashville Warbler: one Canadice Lake June 17 (RS, GM), defending territory; Yellow-rumped Warbler: one to two above Honeoye Lake June 17 thru 23 (GOS, RBA); and two LP June 2 (RBA); Pine Warbler: several locations in the higher country; and **PRAIRIE WARBLER:** one to six singing males Canadice June 2 thru July 7 (R & SS, mob); and one Rush June 14 to 15 (SaT). Migrant warbler records of note include: **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER:** IC Aug. 24 (NH); **WORM-EATING WARBLER:** two IC Aug. 24 (NH); Tennessee Warbler: Hamlin July 29 (CP, BS); and IC Aug. 5 (WLi, mob), both very early; Nashville Warbler: IC July 28 (RBA), early; Yellow Warbler: max. 1000+ WL July 28 (NH, mob); Magnolia Warbler: IC Aug. 16 (NH), early; Yellow-rumped Warbler: BB Aug. 11 (SH), early; Bay-breasted Warbler: four WL Aug. 5 (WLi, mob), early; Palm Warbler: IC Aug. 19 (RD), very early; and Yellow-breasted Chat: Hamlin Aug. 9.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS:** **WESTERN MEADOWLARK** was present most of the season: one singing male PB thru Aug. 5 (mob). A surprise find was **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD:** one fem. near BB June 25 thru 28 (CP, MD, mob). Orchard Oriole appears to be increasing with several counts of five reported from the PB area June 8 thru Aug. 21. Far out-of-date was Rusty Blackbird: one Perinton July 7 (R & SS). An albino Com. Grackle: Perinton Aug. 11 (J & JD, StT), was an unusual find. House Finch reports continue in good number and widespread distribution. The lone Pine Siskin of the season was: BB July 8 thru 11 (PR). Dark-eyed Junco: BB Aug. 4 (NH), was an early migrant. Encouraging maxima for local sparrow colonies were: Grasshopper Sparrow: eight Avon July 4; and Henslow's Sparrow: 14 Greece July 7. White-throated Sparrow was reported from several potential breeding locations: Canandaigua L June 20 (KD, mob); above Honeoye L June 17 (RS); and Brighton July 4, Aug. 7 (CC).

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## REGION 3 -- FINGER LAKES

W. E. BENNING

The summer was dry until the heavy rains of late July, and rather wet after that. Temperatures advanced from below normal in June to above in August, giving an average normal temperature for the season. However, daily temperatures went from hot to cold like a yo-yo. Mid-July was very hot and mid-August had some very cool days with a record low of 39 degrees at Ithaca on August 19.

Reports from Elmira include an Arctic Loon for the third time in four years. The first fall warblers hit there July 28 including Black-and-white, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Common Yellowthroat and Wilson's. The first TV tower kill of *Empidonax* sp. occurred August 20. On August 27 thru 28 more than 100 birds of 14 species were killed. They were mostly warblers, but included five Yellow-bellied Flycatchers.

With water levels held high at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, the often fantastic shorebirding, which can occur there when large mudflats are exposed, did not take place this summer. There was a small mudflat area exposed for a few days just as the fall shorebird movement started and Lesser Yellowlegs and Least Sandpipers appeared right on schedule on June 29, followed by a Ruff on July 2. After the late July rains, some shorebirds appeared at the Waterloo dump, including Killdeer, both yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitcher and Spotted, Pectoral, Least, Stilt and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The Ithaca airport pond also hosted some shorebirds including Semipalmated Plover, Common Snipe, Lesser Yellowlegs and Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral and Least Sandpipers.

The eagle hacking program at Montezuma Refuge was continued for the fourth year with four young Bald Eagles raised. Some of the birds fledged there in prior years have returned and have been seen flying in the area.

Among the encouraging aspects of the past season was the continued nesting of Goshawks, Cooper's and Red-shouldered Hawks near Ithaca. There were increased reports of both cuckoos and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. While still too early to get real excited about it, there seems to be a bit of improvement in the status of the beleaguered Vesper Sparrow.

The top ornithological story of the summer has to be the incursion of several southern species into the Region, especially the Ithaca area, and the nesting or attempted nesting by several of them. An Alder Flycatcher was found feeding three young in a nest at Cayuta Lake outlet in Schuyler County. This would appear to be the first nesting of the species in the Region since Dr. A. A. Allen photographed a nest in Taughannock State Park during the 1940's. The Fish Crows, after visiting Ithaca annually for five years, built a nest, as reported in the last issue of *The Kingbird*, but no young were seen. Also in Ithaca a pair of White-eyed Vireos were heard calling daily and observed carrying food but no nest was found. The actions of a pair of Kentucky Warblers plus the presence of a nearby fledgling would certainly indicate nesting near Brooktondale. A Hooded Warbler's nest was located in Arnot Forest. All in all it was an exciting summer for Ithaca area birders.

Rarities: White Pelican, Ruff, Acadian Flycatcher, Fish Crow, White-eyed Vireo, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler and Orchard Oriole.

Abbreviations: BBS—U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey (Trumansburg June 3, Orleans June 9); MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; RBC—Resident Bird Census (Geneva June 10, Ithaca June 16), \* (starred)—details on file.

Contributors and compilers: W. E. Benning; Jack Brubaker (Watkins Glen); Vernon Dewey (MNWR); Bernice Hilfiker; Wilfred Howard; Malcolm Lerch (Penn Yan); Dorothy McIlroy (Ithaca); Mary Welles (Elmira).

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: one spent the summer at Keuka L. **WHITE PELICAN**: the bird which appeared at MNWR last April stayed until mid-Aug. deep in the marsh where it was visible only to the Refuge personnel going about their work. Double-crested Cormorant: up to two immatures were seen at MNWR during the latter half of the summer. Great Blue Heron: a small heronry was found near Dundee. Great Egret: single bird at MNWR during Aug. Least Bittern: one MNWR Aug. 8. Canada Goose: an estimated 600 summered at MNWR. Snow Goose: an injured blue phase bird remained at MNWR well into July. Egyptian Goose: two escaped birds at MNWR June 2. Maximum duck numbers at MNWR were as follows:

Mallard	4,500	Green-winged Teal	200	Northern Shoveler	50
Black	200	Blue-winged Teal	400	Wood Duck	1,400
Gadwall	250	Am. Wigeon	50	Hooded Merganser	50
Pintail	75				

Hooded Mergansers nested in a Wood Duck house at Wellsburg.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Goshawk: of the three known active nests in Tompkins Co. two were successful. On June 6 two young were banded south of Brooktondale. A nest SE of Ithaca fledged young. There were three sightings on the Ithaca RBC and one at S. Danby July 17. Cooper's Hawk: reported from MNWR and four locations around Ithaca. A nest at Cayuga Heights had downy chicks June 13, 17 and 20 but on the 24th the undamaged nest was empty. Red-shouldered Hawk: a pair nested at Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary, Ithaca. Broad-winged Hawk: one Ithaca RBC. Bald Eagle: one Brooktondale July 3 (P. Drake). Osprey: two MNWR from mid-July on. Ruffed Grouse: on the upswing in the Ithaca area. Ring-necked Pheasant: the Orleans BBS listed 12. All other reports were zero to five. Am. Coot: max 500 MNWR. Upland Sandpiper: 20 at Horseheads June 3 (WH) and one on the Ithaca RBC. **RUFF**: one MNWR July 2 (WEB). The usual hundreds (up to 1,500) of Ring-billed Gulls, with a few Herring Gulls thrown in, frequented the Waterloo Dump. Caspian Tern: two Watkins Glen Aug. 16. Black Tern: 200 to 300 MNWR.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: four Orleans BBS; two Geneva RBC; one Reeder's Creek, Sen. Co. June 23; one Tyre Aug. 23. Black-billed Cuckoo: widely reported from around the Region with a high of 14 on the Orleans BBS. Screech Owl: two young out of the nest Ithaca June 19. Barred Owl: one on the Ithaca RBC and one heard on Connecticut Hill, Ithaca July 24. Short-eared Owl: one Geneva RBC. Whip-poor-will: one Ithaca June 23, only report. Com. Nighthawk: one on the Ithaca RBC and singles at Geneva Aug. 17 and Reeder's Creek Aug. 25 and 31. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: two or three young at Etna June 7 (Sally Spofford).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: several reported around Elmira. **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER**: one seen at Cayuta Lake outlet May 19 (B. Strath). Seen again on June 14. On July 13 it was feeding three young in a nest. Last seen July 28 (JB). Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Ithaca Aug. 25; one Elmira Aug. 27 thru 30. Bank Swallow: a colony in Tyre Township, Seneca Co., which was destroyed last year by additional excavation, was reestablished this year. Rough-winged Swallow: very few reports. Cliff Swallow: reported from Penn Yan only. Purple Martin: good colonies at MNWR. **FISH CROW**: the Ithaca pair was present throughout the period but there was no sign of young at the nest

which they built in May. Red-breasted Nuthatch: at least four present at Watkins Glen during June with one pair apparently nesting. Winter Wren: a singing male at Ithaca thru June; two reports of a bird carrying moss at Slaterville Wildflower Preserve but no nest was found; a bird singing at Cayuta L outlet July 13. Carolina Wren: one Ithaca RBC; one Montour Falls Aug. 1. Mockingbird: a nest with three young found in Seneca Co. E. Bluebird: nested at Ithaca and Trumansburg; two reports of a group on Harris Hill, Elmira. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: numerous reports especially from MNWR and the Elmira area.

**VIREOS-WARBLERS:** **WHITE-EYED VIREO:** a pair called daily at Crescent Place, Ithaca to Aug. 14 and continued to be present to the end of the period. The birds were observed carrying food but no nest was found or young observed (Dan Gray). **Yellow-throated Vireo:** four Ithaca RBC. **Solitary Vireo:** one Connecticut Hill, Ithaca, July 24. **Red-eyed Vireo:** 33 Ithaca RBC. **Philadelphia Vireo:** one was seen, heard singing and the song was taped at Buttermilk Falls June 14 and 15. **Warbling Vireo:** 11 Ithaca RBC. **Warblers:** **Prothonotary:** one east of Ithaca along Fall Creek July 13 (Ericksen); one heard Ontario Co. June 9 (R. Spahn). **Golden-winged:** in the Ithaca area the resident males dropped from eight last year to three this year. **Blue-winged:** 15 resident males in the Ithaca area. "Lawrence's" **Warbler:** three resident males at Ithaca. "Brewster's" **Warbler:** five resident males at Ithaca. **Prairie:** six to ten singing males near Montour Falls (JB). **Northern Waterthrush:** four Ithaca RBC; one MNWR July 31. **Louisiana Waterthrush:** nest with four young at Slaterville Wildflower Preserve during June. At least two young were fledged; observed feeding young for several days in July on West Bluff Road, Yates Co.; one at Clyde Aug. 3. **KENTUCKY:** a pair was discovered carrying food on Hammond Hill Road, Brooktondale, on June 23. The pair was seen daily thru June 27 carrying food and were much agitated when observers were around. On the 27th a fledgling was seen in the bushes with the adults nearby carrying food but actual feeding of the young bird was not observed (J & K Confer, W & S Spofford, DM)\*. **Mourning:** seen and heard singing near Dryden June 5, 12 and 13; in the Ithaca area JC located twelve birds in two hours including three females with young. **HOODED:** seven males were seen in four locations in Tompkins Co. (DM, JC); a nest was located in Arnot Forest (C. Smith).

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** **Bobolink:** up to 20 in a hayfield along E. Lake Road, Seneca Co. E. **Meadowlark:** reported down by most observers. **ORCHARD ORIOLE:** first year male Ithaca June 11 (M. Shepherd); immature at Reeder's Creek, Seneca Co. in the same area where one was observed last year (BK). **House Finch:** continues to increase. **ML** caught and banded 40 at his feeders at Penn Yan on June 16. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** apparently had good nesting success at Horseheads as many immatures were noted Aug. 14 (WH). **Henslow's Sparrow:** three heard near Orleans, Ontario Co. June 9 (R. Spahn). **Vesper Sparrow:** this now rare species may be a bit more plentiful. The Orleans BBS yielded 15 and the Geneva RBC 16. Ithaca had two resident males and a bird was seen in Seneca Co. **Dark-eyed Junco:** young out of the nest were seen at Ringwood June 9 (Sally Spofford). **White-throated Sparrow:** two resident males at Ithaca.

R.D. 2, Tyre Rd., Clyde, New York 14433

## REGION 4 - SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

June was a little on the cool side with about normal precipitation until the latter part of the month, when a dry spell started that lasted past mid-July.

August brought back a normal, or better, level of rainfall, and also the only really hot weather of the season.

The results from eight of the thirteen Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird survey routes (BBS) completely or mostly within Region Four, were available at this writing. Those eight routes produced 6604 individual birds of 98 species compared to 6201 individuals of 100 species found on the same eight routes last year, a two percent drop in species and a seven percent increase in individuals. Considering only species for which thirty or more individuals were recorded at least one of the two years, the five species showing the greatest percentage increases were Chimney Swift (83%), Common Flicker (71%), Common Grackle (67%), Eastern Kingbird (48%), and Ovenbird (41%). Likewise, the species with the greatest percentage decreases were Northern Oriole (44%), Cardinal (36%), Killdeer (31%), Chestnut-sided Warbler (24%) and Bobolink (24%). The totals for every species found on at least one of the routes are reported below in the form: (8, 5) to be read eight individuals on five routes.

The eight surveys available were: Whitney Point, June 27, R. Pantle; Coventryville, June 23, L. Bemont; McDonough, June 14, C. Howard; Corbettsville, June 14, J. Lehman; Oxford, June 3, H. Marsi; Lisle, June 30, R. Pantle; East Newark, June 28, E. Hawken; Vestal Center, June 26, E. Hawken.

Rarities included a Great Gray Owl (actually a belated winter season report), Fish Crows and Northern Parula, Cerulean and Kentucky Warblers.

Observers: Jeannette and Cutler Baldwin; Pat Bohmert (PB); Bruce Bozdos; Anne Caselberry (AS); Mildred Clark; Gail Corderman (GC); Anna and Marilyn Davis; Mary Dobinsky; Sadie Dorber (SD); Diane Drabo; Polly and Earl Getkin; Clinton Gerould (CG); John Gustafson (JG); Claude Howard (CH); Virginia Hudson; Jay Lehman (JL); Florence Linaberry (FL); Harriet Marsi (HM); Bob Marx; Evelyn and Bud Mead; Mike and Kathy Medovich; Robert and Rita Pantle; Booth Perkins; James Riley; Randy Ross (RR); Scott Rubinstein (SR); Mary Sheffield (MS); Robert Sheffield; Julian Shepherd (JS); William Stupke (WS); Cora Wellman; Mildred White; Lance Whitehead; Connie Wilkins; Kathryn Wilson.

LOONS—DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: (6,6); two Cortland Co. heronries checked—one "seemed to do well," but at the other very few nests and on July 2 a fully fledged young found decapitated beneath nests (JG); frequent reports of one to four birds throughout Region and period—twelve near Cortland Aug. 15 the highest count away from heronries. Great Egret: Aug. 18 and 23 Owego. Green Heron: for the sixth year a nesting pair reported at a locality near Milford, in Otsego Co.—two adults and four young seen at one time—left area by July 9; numbers up a little from low of last few years. Am. Bittern: July 4 Whitney Point (MS); two Aug. 30 near Cortland (WS); the only reports. Canada Goose: twenty June 8 Delhi; July 8 Windsor. Mallard: (4,1). Black Duck: two Aug. reports, from Windsor and Lisle; no others. Blue-winged Teal: a pair nested in Lime Hollow Sanctuary, Cortland Co., but young never seen; three Aug. 23 Whitney Point; seven Aug. 26 Sherburne; fourteen Aug. 31 Portlandville-Milford. Wood Duck: nested at Lime Hollow Sanctuary; an adult with nine immatures July 21 Portlandville-Oneonta. Hooded Merganser: Aug. 5, Windsor.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: the usual small numbers seen regularly in Otsego, Delaware and e. Broome Cos.; 15 Aug. 30 Delhi, max. Cooper's Hawk (1,1), Oxford BBS. Red-tailed Hawk: none on any of the available BBS reports, but otherwise no noticeable decline; nine Aug. 11 Portlandville-Oneonta, max. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Aug. 17 Portlandville-Milford, the only report. Marsh Hawk: (1,1) Oxford BBS; one Aug. 17 Portlandville-Milford the only other report. Osprey: Aug. 5 Whitney Point, the first of five Aug. reports. Am. Kestrel: (13,7). Bobwhite: (1,1) Oxford BBS; Candor July 4. Ring-

necked Pheasant: (3,2); one other report, from Candor, Turkey: (1,1), McDonough BBS; twelve Aug. 12 Emmons, e. of Oneonta, reported in area for about ten days. Semipalmated Plover: Aug. 18 Owego; Aug. 23 Norwich, heard flying at night (JL); one Aug. 26 Sherburne. Killdeer: (35,7). Com. Snipe: one Aug. 11 Portlandville-Oneonta. Spotted Sandpiper: (4,2). Solitary Sandpiper: one Aug. 4 Milford-Oneonta, the first fall migrant, Greater Yellowlegs: "easily seen" at Lime Hollow Sanctuary. Pectoral Sandpiper: one Aug. 11 Portlandville-Oneonta; no others. Least Sandpiper: one Aug. 15 Cortland; Aug. 18 Owego; no others. Semipalmated Sandpiper: two Portlandville-Oneonta Aug. 11 and one in the same general area Aug. 17. Herring Gull: Aug. 17 Whitney Point and Port Crane, the first since Apr. Ring-billed Gull: half a dozen or so Aug. 5 Whitney Point, the first since May. Bonaparte's Gull: Aug. 18 Owego.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Rock Dove: (74,8). Mourning Dove: (60,8); young in nest July 19 Cortland. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: five June reports to the 16th, then no more. Black-billed Cuckoo: (4,3); four more reports into Aug. Screech Owl: a young bird brought in to Cortland College in June, turned over to Barry Batzing family for rearing—released July 22; one heard calling fairly regularly from Aug. 4 in Norwich. Great Horned Owl: (1,1), McDonough BBS. Barred Owl: July 29 Owego; one s. of Binghamton Aug. 7. **GREAT GRAY OWL:** one mid-Feb. to about Mar. 1 Sherburne (PB)—the yellow eyes showed clearly in color print sent to B. Burt, which was obviously of a Great Gray—too good to leave out, even though two seasons late, as it is the only record in over 25 years for the Region. Long-eared Owl: June 2 Binghamton, one adult and one young near a large nest (HM). Com. Nighthawk: reported from Norwich, Oneonta and the Triple Cities area, but only in small numbers. Chimney Swift: (57,6); "big flock" over Binghamton Aug. 17. Belted Kingfisher: (9,6). Com. Flicker: (41,8). Pileated Woodpecker: (2,2); three other reports. Red-headed Woodpecker: a pair seen at Homer during the summer, "evidently nesting"; an adult n. of Sherburne Aug. 5 and 7 in an area where second and third hand reports claim several pairs have nested; two Lisle Aug. 22; Owego Aug. 23. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (4,3); several other June reports from the Triple Cities and Oneonta areas; three immatures Aug. 4 Portlandville-Milford. Hairy Woodpecker: (1,1). Downy Woodpecker: (16,8).

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** E. Kingbird: (40,7); noticeable increase in numbers in Cortland, Broome and Tioga Cos. Great Crested Flycatcher: (28,6). E. Phoebe: (43,8); "seemed scarce" in Cortland Co. Willow Flycatcher: (15,4). Alder Flycatcher: (9,2). Least Flycatcher: (61,8). E. Wood Pewee: (29,8). Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Portlandville-Milford Aug. 4. Tree Swallow: (84,7); "many" Aug. 23 at Whitney Point were doubtless gathering migrants. Bank Swallow: (12,1) Whitney Point BBS. Rough-winged Swallow: (10,2); thirty Sherburne July 11. Barn Swallow: (214,8). Cliff Swallow: (2,1) Corbettsville BBS; twenty nest colony at Portlandville "active" until late Aug.; one Sherburne July 11; regular at Owego in June and July. Purple Martin: reported from two Binghamton area locations in July and from Owego, but from nowhere else. Blue Jay: (105,8). Com. Crow: (329,8). **FISH CROW:** "all spring and summer, a dozen by late summer." Vestal (GC). Black-capped Chickadee: (64,8). Tufted Titmouse: (8,2). White-breasted Nuthatch: (5,3). Red-breasted Nuthatch: (5,2); all during period Portlandville-Oneonta, max six Aug. 17; June 28 s. of Binghamton. Brown Creeper: June 10 Choconut Center; in June and July at Bowman Lake, in Chenango Co.; June 28 s. of Binghamton; one Portlandville-Oneonta July 21. House Wren: (128,8). Winter Wren: (2,2); 3 Portlandville-Milford June 9; June 13 and 14 Spencer, in Tioga Co., one singing from a junk yard; one at Solon, in Cortland Co., July 16; s. of Binghamton June 23. Carolina Wren: at Port Dickinson through June and July; Lisle Aug. 22; also from Owego. Mockingbird: (3,3); two fledglings being fed by two adults near SUNY Binghamton campus in June. Gray Catbird: (161,8). Brown Thrasher: (20,6). Am. Robin: (530,8). Wood Thrush: (129,8). Hermit Thrush: (6,3); seven other reports from scattered points around the Region. Veery: (83,8). E. Bluebird: (4,2); only five other scattered reports, including two pairs nesting in Cortland Co. and a family group of two adults and three immatures Aug. 26 at Earlville, in Chenango Co. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Aug. 29 Cortland, the first fall migrant. Cedar Waxwing: (81,7); a noticeable increase in activity



and abundance in the latter part of July and Aug. Starling: (504,8).

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS:** Yellow-throated Vireo: (11,5). Solitary Vireo: (2,2); five Portlandville-Oneonta June 16, max of seven other reports, the last Aug. 4. **Red-eyed Vireo:** (124,8). Philadelphia Vireo: June 28 s. of Binghamton (CH); Aug. 23 Whitney Point (AS, SD). Warbling Vireo: (14,7). Black-and-white Warbler: (12,2). Worm-eating Warbler: June 9 SUNY Binghamton campus (JS), and was seen up to three weeks earlier. Golden-winged Warbler: (1,1) Corbettsville BBS; eight other reports, all from Broome and Tioga Cos. Blue-winged Warbler: (2,1) Corbettsville BBS; five other reports, all from Broome and Tioga Cos. "Lawrence's" Warbler: one Choconut Center July 14 (MS)—black eye-patches, black bib, yellow all over body a bit mottled—both a golden-winged and a blue-winged in the group, which from the calls sounded like it included one or more young—the Golden-winged appeared to be an adult male. Tennessee Warbler: four Portlandville-Oneonta Aug. 11; several later reports. Nashville Warbler: (1,1) E. Newark BBS; present all summer, as usual; seven Portlandville-Milford Aug. 17 possibly migrants. **NO. PARULA:** one Portlandville-Oneonta June 2; three Solon, in Cortland Co., June 16 (RR), singing males and therefore "presumed breeding?" Yellow Warbler: (144,8): migration notes and behavior at Norwich the week of July 12 to 19, but one Portlandville-Milford Aug. 17 the last. Magnolia Warbler: (4,2); three other reports in June; one July 21 Portlandville-Oneonta and four Aug. reports. Cape May Warbler: six Norwich Aug. 22; nine banded at one Vestal location Aug. 28 to 31. Black-throated Blue Warbler: (4,1) Oxford BBS; fairly frequent reports in the Oneonta-Portlandville and Triple cities areas. Yellow-rumped Warbler: (1,1) Corbettsville BBS; June 2, three June 23 and three July 21, all in the Portlandville-Oneonta area; one Delhi June 23; July 14 Bowman Lake; apparent migrants from Aug. 17. Black-throated Green Warbler: (6,3); ten Portlandville-Oneonta June 9; 5 Solon June 16; six other June reports; three July and early Aug. reports; migrants from Aug. 17. **CERULEAN WARBLER:** one Ludlow Lake June 15 (HM, BB, FL). Blackburnian Warbler: (5,3); one Solon June 16; next report five Portlandville-Oneonta Aug. 17. Chestnut-sided Warbler: (34,7). Bay-breasted Warbler: one banded Aug. 8. Vestal and five more banded there after Aug. 22; two Portlandville-Oneonta Aug. 17. Pine Warbler: two Solon June 16. Prairie Warbler: (1,1) Corbettsville BBS. Palm Warbler: Aug. 24 Owego (CG). Ovenbird: (69,8). N. Waterthrush: (1,1) Coventryville BBS; one June 16 Solon. Louisiana Waterthrush: (2,1) E. Newark BBS; two Portlandville-Milford June 9. **KENTUCKY WARBLER:** June 9 SUNY Binghamton campus singing (JS), one day only. Mourning Warbler: (3,1) McDonough BBS; four Portlandville-Milford June 9; four singing males Plymouth July 4. Com. Yellowthroat: (328,8). Wilson's Warbler: Aug. 23 Cortland; Aug. 28 Chenango Forks. Canada Warbler: (1,1) Corbettsville BBS; eighteen Portlandville-Milford June 9; feeding young Aug. 15 near Binghamton. Am. Redstart: (27,5).

**WEAVERS-SPARROWS:** House Sparrow: (222,8). Bobolink: (103,8); Portlandville-Oneonta Aug. 11, last report. E. Meadowlark: (45,8). Red-winged Blackbird: (849,8). No. Oriole: (68,8). Com. Grackle: (350,8). Brown-headed Cowbird: (52,7). Scarlet Tanager: (49,8). Cardinal: (46,8). Rose-breasted Grosbeak: (55,7). Indigo Bunting: (72,8); increased abundance noted at Cortland. Purple Finch: (12,5); seemed numerous this summer. House Finch: (4,2); 278 banded at one Vestal location in Aug.; also at Cortland, Owego and Norwich. Am. Goldfinch: (88,8). Rufous-sided Towhee: (42,8). Savannah Sparrow: (52,7). Grasshopper Sparrow: (2,2) Corbettsville and Vestal Center BBSs, the only reports. Henslow's Sparrow: reported from Owego and Candor, but nowhere else. Vesper Sparrow: (3,2); four other reports, all from Portlandville-Milford-Oneonta area. Dark-eyed Junco: (6,3); fifteen on June 9 and ten on July 21, the best counts of fairly numerous records. Chipping Sparrow: (196,8); "many" Aug. 11 and 17 Portlandville-Oneonta; giving high pitched migration note Norwich Aug. 22 and apparently passing through; Aug. 25 Norwich an adult feeding an immature. Field Sparrow: (79,8). White-throated Sparrow: (18,5); nine other June reports and scattered reports through July and Aug. Swamp Sparrow: (11,4). Song Sparrow: (331,8).

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## REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

GENE HUGGINS

The month of June was close to the average for summer weather in Region 5. There was a brief period of cold temperatures which resulted in the mortality of some species, but fortunately not to a great extent.

From the beginning of July until the second week in August, extremely dry conditions existed throughout the Region. The dry spell helped to prolong and expand the exposure of mudflats for migrating shorebirds. One feature which became apparent during this migration was the extreme paucity of immature shorebirds on these exposed areas. Unfortunately these same areas, such as the north and south spit at Sandy Pond, the east shore of Oneida Lake and the mudflats at Onondaga Lake, are becoming subject to more and more human disturbance. Throughout the Region agricultural land is being increasingly converted into what one birder so aptly describes as the "corn desert," favorable only to icterids, but no haven for other birds. This is especially true for the Savannah, Grasshopper, and Henslow's Sparrows. Along with this expansion of cultivated acreage comes the removal of hedgerows, a valuable habitat for mimids and sparrows.

The last two weeks in August brought badly needed rain and a resurgence of green growth that almost seemed like a second spring. During this time impressive numbers of early migrating vireos, warblers and flycatchers passed through the area.

Intracontinentally wintering species such as wrens, kinglets, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are all showing low numbers, in large part due to the last two severe winters.

Contributors: Dorothy W. Ackley (DWA); Kate & Steve Coyle (KC); Paul DeBenedictis (PDeB); Bruno & Dee DeSimone (DeS); Gene Huggins (GH); Jay Lehman; Bob Long; Belle & Sheila Peebles; Marge S. Rusk; Fritz Scheider (FGS); Gerald Smith (GS); Mackenzie Stewart (MacS); Mandy Stooks (MS); Eiba Van Dresar; Dorothy W. Crumb (DWC).

Abbreviations: Breeding Bird Surveys—BBS; Howland's Island—Higma; Lake Ontario littoral—LOL; Onondaga Lake—Onon L.; Sandy Pond—SPd.

Observations for which no observer is listed should be credited to F. G. Scheider.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: one lingering on Oneida L. Sylvan Beach June 3 (B & S Peebles) and two at SPd. July 15; Pied-billed Grebe: max. ten Higma Aug. 11 (PDeB); Double-crested Cormorant: up in numbers, max 26 LOL Aug. 26 (MSR) with one on Onon L Aug. 31; Black-crowned Night Heron: max seven near Manlius Ct. Aug. 3 (KC); Least Bittern: very low numbers, max two Sterling Creek Marsh July 7; Am. Bittern: scattered singles, one each from Clay Marsh, Deer Cr. Marsh, and Rome Marsh; Black Duck: max 18 Onon L, Amboy Pool Aug. 3, becoming increasingly scarce; Gadwall: one to two/day July 4 thru Aug. 31 Onon L, SPd; Pintail: two arriving Onon L July 25; Blue-winged Teal: max 37 LOL Aug. 25 (MSR); N. Shoveler: four arriving Onon L. Aug. 25; Wood Duck: max 45 Scott Swamp Aug. 26; Lesser Scaup: one at Onon L July 30, no other diving ducks for the period.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: expanding but poor in numbers, max four/day with two at Hinckley Res. July 13 (MacS); Marsh Hawk: scattered singles in the Region; Ruffed Grouse: max 11 Chittenango Gorge June 16 (MacS); Ring-necked Pheasant: one to two/day

continuing to decline; Virginia Rail: max 11 Utica Marsh June 10; Sora Rail: one adult, six immatures DeWitt Marsh July 10 (KC); Com. Gallinule: max 12 Sage Cr. Marsh Aug. 24 (MSR); Semipalmated Plover: max 25 Sylvan Beach Aug. 11 (DWA), arriving July 20, Onon L; Black-bellied Plover: max seven Onon L Aug. 29 (KC), arriving Aug. 16 Sylvan Beach (DWA); WHIMBREL: three birds SPd. Aug. 30 (FGS & DWC); Ruddy Turnstone: max three SPd. Aug. 26, arriving July 27 Onon L (KC); Upland Sandpiper: max 19 Canastota area Aug. 26 (KC); Spotted Sandpiper: max 32 Onon L July 14; Solitary Sandpiper: two arrived Amboy Pool July 5; Greater Yellowlegs: scarce one to five/day, arriving Amboy Pool June 29; Lesser Yellowlegs: max 127 Amboy Pool Aug. 24, arriving June 28, Onon L; Knot: two adults Onon L July 27 thru 29 with a max three at the same locality Aug. 31; Pectoral Sandpiper: max 41 Onon L July 26, arriving July 19; Baird's Sandpiper: max seven Onon L Aug. 21 (PDeB), first date July 25; Least Sandpiper: max 75 Onon L Aug. 13, arriving June 28; Short-billed Dowitcher: max 25 Sylvan Beach Aug. 24 (DWA), earliest date, Onon L July 4; Stilt Sandpiper: max 24 Onon L Aug. 24, arriving July 15; Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 178 Onon L July 26, first date July 15; Sanderling: max 18 Sylvan Beach Aug. 1 (DWA), arriving July 20 Onon L; Wilson's Phalarope: an impressive flight for the Region max five Onon L, Amboy Pool July 27 (DWC), arriving Onon L July 4, a total of 12 for the period; N. Phalarope: one to two/day SPd, Onon L Aug. 16 thru 31; Parasitic Jaeger: four light phase birds Derby Hill Aug. 25 (GS); Great Black-backed Gull: max four at midsummer SPd. July 15; Bonaparte's Gull: one at Onon L July 20 (PDeB); LITTLE GULL: one SPd Aug. 19 (FGS); Caspian Tern: Onon L in recent years has become a staging area with a max 28 Aug. 19; Black Tern: very low numbers, max nine along Salmon R July 19; none at Scott Swamp or Clay Marsh.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: max three N Victory BBS June 1; Black-billed Cuckoo: max five through the period; Short-eared Owl: one at SPd. flats Aug. 19; Com. Nighthawk: an increase of five birds and two breeding pairs over the previous year for a total of 19, Syracuse (B. Long); Chimney Swift: max 150+ Oneida June 25 (B & S Peebles); Red-headed Woodpecker: max five s. Madison Co. July 9 (GC); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: scarce on the Tug Hill Plateau, max 7 July 5.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: E. Kingbird: max 41 Oswego Co. Aug. 12; E. Phoebe: scarce with a max four/day; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one arrived at Hickory Grove LOL Aug. 12; Least Flycatcher: max 22 Tug Hill Plateau Aug. 5; Tree Swallow: max 1,200 SPd. Aug. 26; Barn Swallow: max 9,000 SPd. Aug. 26; Bank Swallow: max 2,000 SPd. Aug. 26; Cliff Swallow: eight nests under a barn roof at Holland Patent (Van Dresar); Tufted Titmouse: two adults and one immature at Clinton July 27 thru Aug. 3 (DeSimones); Brown Creeper: singles only, scarce as breeders on the lake plain due to the shedding of bark from dead American elm; House Wren: max 14/day through the period; Long-billed Marsh Wren: max 53 Sterling Creek Marsh by canoe 3.5 mi. July 7; Mockingbird: nesting pairs at Whitesboro and DeWitt-Syracuse area; Brown Thrasher: max 13 Kasoag BBS (MSR); Hermit Thrush: one to three in the Tug Hill Plateau very low; E. Bluebird: in the Oneida area there were 250 boxes with 36 active nests and 20 nesting pairs. From those active nests 157 eggs were laid with 128 hatching and 97 being fledged. The Eaton area had 29 out of the 82 boxes with fledged young. Golden-crowned Kinglet: one each from the N. Wilmurt BBS, and the McKeever BBS.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: one arriving at SPd Aug. 19; Warbling Vireo: max 19 N. Victory BBS June 1 (MSR); Golden-winged Warbler: max 19 cent. Oswego Co. Aug. 12; "Lawrence's" Warbler: one at Pratt's Falls June 2 thru 22 (FGS, KC); Tennessee Warbler: one at Pompey July 12, a very early arrival date (DWC); No. Parula: one at SPd Aug. 30; Yellow Warbler: max 39 SPd Aug. 16; Magnolia Warbler: one in cent. Oswego Co. Aug. 12 with a max 48 Pompey Aug. 28 (DWC); Black-throated Blue Warbler: Max 17 Tug Hill Plateau Aug. 5; Black-throated Green Warbler: max 25 Old Forge BBS June 27; Chestnut-sided Warbler: max 35 on the McKeever BBS and a max 21 Kasoag BBS; Bay-breasted Warbler: one arrived in cent. Oswego Co. Aug. 12; Pine Warbler: one at Pine Grove near Sel-

kirk Shores State Park July 19, and one in cent. Oswego Co. Aug. 12; Ovenbird: max 25 Fairdale June 17 (MSR); Louisiana Waterthrush: one Chittenango Gorge July 30 (MacS), and one at the mouth of Nine Mile Cr. Onon L July 25; Yellow-breasted Chat: one at Pompey June 26, 27 (DWC); Hooded Warbler: one to three/day Oswego Co. lake plain; Canada Warbler: max 12 Tug Hill Plateau Aug. 5.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolink: max 150 cent. Oswego Co. Aug. 12; Orchard Oriole: one Town Island Rd., Kirkville, two adults and two young last seen June 14; Scarlet Tanager: max 13 Old Forge BBS June 27; Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 26 cent. Oswego Co. Aug. 12; Indigo Bunting: max 18 N. Wilmurt BBS June 25; Savannah Sparrow: max 8 Deer Creek area July 8, very low numbers; Grasshopper Sparrow: six birds for the period from three separate localities: Syracuse Airport, Town of Redfield, Camden area; Henslow's Sparrow: max 8 Bolivar, DeWitt Marsh area Aug. 5 (KC); Vesper Sparrow: a total of seven birds from six localities in the Region continuing to show a steady decline; Chipping Sparrow: max 37 McKeever BBS June 23; Field Sparrow: max seven Kasoag BBS June 10 (MSR); Swamp Sparrow: max 27 July 7.

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## REGION 6 - ST. LAWRENCE

LEE B. CHAMBERLAINE

Summer of 1979 could be called cool. Although highs of low 90° temperatures were recorded, records for lows were broken. On June 13th a low of 39° F (3° C) was recorded. On June 25 a low of 33° F (1° C) was recorded and on July 4 a cool record 40° F low for that date broke a 1927 record. Rainfall was light for June and July. Heavy rain in the beginning of August and mid-August made up the deficits in total rainfall. Lake Ontario water levels dropped during the dry spell but not as low as last year. The dry summer conditions again favored abundant fruit production in almost all wildlife food species and cone production was also up. Indications of an early Fall were evident.

Positive trends for the period are: increases in Turkey Vulture; Bald Eagles all over; improvements in Marsh Hawks and Upland Sandpipers; excellent shorebird reports; multiple Short-billed Marsh Wren sightings; a Loggerhead Shrike nest and some excellent grassland sparrow records.

Negatives for the period include: no Sharp-shinned or Cooper's Hawk sightings; low numbers of American Kestrels; almost nonexistent phoebes, Horned Larks, Vesper Sparrows and low numbers of White-throated Sparrows. Additionally, there are as yet unexplained "local" lows of certain species. Why are cowbirds low in the Henderson area? Perhaps the dry summer weather?

Rarities for the period and there were more than normal included: Great Egret, Mute Swan, Stilt Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Barn Owl, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Louisiana Waterthrush, Yellow-breasted Chat, Grasshopper Sparrow and Henslow's Sparrow.

Contributors: John Belknap; Agnes Blake; Stewart Brown; Richard Brouse; Lee Chamberlaine; Frank Clinch; Tim Dawson; Nick Leone; Joe VanRiet; Bob and June Walker.

**LOONS—DUCKS:** Com. Loon: one Wilson Hill June 2; six St. Lawrence River near Long Sault Island June 2; one immature El Dorado Aug. 19; Adirondack production about normal—there is some concern for potential loss of habitat from acid rain problem at higher elevation ponds. Horned Grebe: one El Dorado Aug. 4 (nearly spring plumage); one El Dorado Aug. 5 (summer plumage). Pied-billed Grebe: none reported. Double-crested Cormorant: four Massena June 2; eight El Dorado June 3; 14 Lakeview June 7; 17 El Dorado Aug. 25; no data on Little Galloo Isl. production but sightings indicate another excellent year. Great Blue Heron: sightings indicate another excellent production year. Green Heron: much improvement in Henderson area—seen daily. Cattle Egret: no info on Little Galloo production and no inland sightings reported. **GREAT EGRET:** one El Dorado Aug. 4 (N. Leone and Walkers), one Wilson Hill July 1 (J. VanRiet). Black-crowned Night Heron: 12 Cape Vincent breakwall June 28; 43 around Cornwall Is. St. Lawrence River June 30; no data on Lake Ontario Islands production. Least Bittern: one Wilson Hill June 30 (J. VanRiet). Am. Bittern: none reported—bears watching. **MUTE SWAN:** one El Dorado Aug. 4 (N. Leone and Walkers)—seen thru period. Canada Goose: production at Perch River may be down—eagle harassment may be a factor? Mallard: as common as ever. Black Duck: five El Dorado Aug. 5; no improvement. Gadwall: six El Dorado Aug. 2; three El Dorado Aug. 17. Pintail: none reported. Green-winged Teal: one female with eight young near Sears Pond on Tug Hill June 30 (L. Chamberlaine); two El Dorado Aug. 7. Blue-winged Teal: 85 El Dorado Aug. 2; 41 El Dorado Aug. 7; very successful year. Wood Duck: excellent production. Com. Goldeneye: one male Wilson Hill June 2 (J. VanRiet). Hooded Merganser: none reported—a species which needs more field work to determine status. Red-breasted Merganser: one female with seven young Moose River Road, Lewis Co. July 6.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: very, very common this year—17 Henderson July 6, 18 near Redwood July 8, one with blue wing tag and number near Mannsville July 12 (Fred Russell)—tagged as an immature at a large sanitary landfill in Dade Co., Florida Jan. 28, 1978—seen at banding location on Nov. 4 and Nov. 10, 1978—the sighting at Mannsville supports hypothesis that urban vultures in Dade Co. are northern migrants (pers. com. Sheila Gaby); seven Westcotts Beach State Park Aug. 10, many other individual and multiple sightings. Goshawk: none reported. Cooper's: none reported. Red-tailed: numbers are down. Red-shouldered: none reported. Broad-winged: none reported. Bald Eagle: one immature at Perch River June 1 feeding on probably a large fish; later two immatures and possibly three were seen at Perch Lake (L. Chamberlaine and S. Brown); one adult near Gouverneur along Oswegatchie River July 30 (J. Belknap)—the same bird (probably) was reported from this area just a year ago. Marsh Hawk: one male near Sears Pond June 23, one female near Sears Pond July 24, one female El Dorado Aug. 26, seen at eight locations in Massena area June-July. Osprey: three (two adults, one immature) on nest in Indian Lakes area July 28 (N. Leone), one El Dorado Aug. 4, a pair on Grass River in Massena area Aug. 6. Am. Kestrel: four (three young of the year) Sears Pond July 24; three El Dorado Aug. 2, five near Rodman Aug. 25; numbers way down—more seen in Tug Hill than Lake Plain areas. Ruffed Grouse: numbers not down as thought—another high year. Virginia Rail: two Beaver Meadows near Watertown July 11, one same July 14. Am. Coot: one Robt. Moses Dam June 2. Semipalmated Plover: ten El Dorado Aug. 4; 13 El Dorado Aug. 26. Ruddy Turnstone: 20 El Dorado Aug. 4, 22 same Aug. 2, 24 same Aug. 5, 20 same Aug. 26. Am. Woodcock: local production about normal. Upland Sandpiper: at seven locations in Massena area June 5—five of these on Hopkinton Breeding Bird Census (J. VanRiet); three near Sackets Harbor June 19; one Henderson June 27, one Chaumont June 28, three Chaumont June 29, one near Sackets Harbor June 23, one Baggs Corners near Dexter July 26, one Antwerp Aug. 6, unbelievable improvement. Solitary Sandpiper: one El Dorado Aug. 12. Lesser Yellowlegs: 30 El Dorado July 27, 43 same Aug. 2, 20 same Aug. 19. Red Knot: two El Dorado Aug. 2, one same Aug. 26. Pectoral Sandpiper: two El Dorado July 27, two same Aug. 4. Short-billed Dowitcher: one El Dorado July 27, two Perch River Aug. 2, six El Dorado Aug. 2, 21 same Aug. 12. **STILT SANDPIPER:** one El Dorado July 27, one

same Aug. 4 (Leone and Walkers). Semipalmated Sandpiper: 300 El Dorado July 27, 200 same Aug. 4. Sanderling: 25 El Dorado Aug. 2, five same Aug. 26. **WILSON'S PHALAROPE**: two El Dorado July 27 (Walkers and N. Leone), three same Aug. 4, one same Aug. 7 (R. Brouse), one same Aug. 12, one same Aug. 19 (R. Brouse). Great Black-backed Gull: one immature El Dorado Aug. 4, four same Aug. 12, three same Aug. 26. Herring Gull: may be decreasing on Lake Ontario? Ring-billed Gull: equal to or exceeds last year's production. Bonaparte's Gull: 17 El Dorado Aug. 2, one same Aug. 4, 120 Robt. Moses Dam Aug. 27. Com. Tern: three El Dorado Aug. 2, four same Aug. 8, four same Aug. 26. Caspian Tern: 15 El Dorado Aug. 2, six same Aug. 4, 16 same Aug. 5, three Three Mile Point Aug. 12, ten El Dorado Aug. 12, 15 same Aug. 19, 14 same Aug. 26. Black Tern: three Perch River June 9, 65 Cornwall Island June 30, five El Dorado Aug. 7.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS**: Mourning Dove: appears on the increase. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one Dry Hill June 9 (Walkers), one Three Mile Point Aug. 19. Black-billed Cuckoo: one Dry Hill June 9, one Brownville June 9. **BARN OWL**: one near Watertown on Martin Road June 10 (T. Dawson). Com. Nighthawk: about 50 Watertown in migration 7:45 pm Aug. 20 (A. Blake and F. Clinch). Chimney Swift: numbers in Henderson down. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: increased somewhat from last year. Com. Flicker: numbers down. Pileated Woodpecker: may be up in numbers? Red-headed Woodpecker: two El Dorado Aug. 26 (R. Brouse). Hairy Woodpecker: numbers down. Downy Woodpecker: numbers down.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS**: E. Kingbird: about normal numbers. E. Phoebe: very, very low in numbers even at the small bridges and stream locations where you always see them. Alder Flycatcher: two June 6, two June 9. Willow Flycatcher: one Brownville June 6, one Dry Hill June 9 (Walkers). E. Wood Pewee: may be down slightly? Horned Lark: none reported. Tree Swallow: normal numbers. Barn Swallow: down in Henderson area. Cliff Swallow: 1200 nests at the three dams in Massena June 30—an increase of 20% over last year (J. VanRiet). Purple Martin: down slightly in Henderson area. White-breasted Nuthatch: still down in Henderson and vicinity. Red-breasted Nuthatch: none reported. Brown Creeper: numbers down. House Wren: excellent year—numbers up. **SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN**: one Haverstock Road Massena June 2 (J. VanRiet), one Ives St. Rd. near Beaver Meadows Marsh July 14 (N. Leone), two same July 16, three same July 21, two same July 27, one 1/4 mile south of Perch River on Route 12 Aug. 2, two near Beaver Meadows Aug. 4 (all N. Leone). Mockingbird: none reported. E. Bluebird: one Robt. Moses State Park June 3 (J. VanRiet), one on the Hopkinton Breeding Bird Census, one Black River June 9 (Walkers), nesting pair Brasher Iron Works June 12 (J. VanRiet). Cedar Waxwing: very very abundant this year. Loggerhead Shrike: one near Gouverneur June 14 (J. Belknap), pair nesting at Haverstock Road raised one young (J. VanRiet).

**VIREOS—WARBLERS**: Solitary Vireo: two Inman Gulf (near Rodman) July 4 (N. Leone). Red-eyed Vireo: down very slightly. Warbling Vireo: down in Henderson area—may not reflect rest of Region. Warblers: Blue-winged: one Dry Hill June 6 and one same June 9 (Walkers). Golden-winged: three Dry Hill June 9 (Walkers). Nashville: one El Dorado Aug. 19 (R. Brouse). No. Parula: two Tug Hill Wildlife Management Area June 23 (Walker and Leone). Yellow: very abundant this year. Yellow-rumped "Myrtle": as common as ever if not more so. **LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH**: one Inman Gulf July 4 (N. Leone), one same Aug. 11 (Leone). Mourning: four males Inman Gulf July 4 (N. Leone). **YELLOW-BREAST-ED CHAT**: two Dry Hill June 9 (Walkers).

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS**: Bobolink: heavy migration movement beginning about Aug. 8; very common this year. E. Meadowlark: increase in Henderson area noted. No. Oriole: good year—in good numbers. Brown-headed Cowbird: in very low numbers in Henderson. Cardinal: becoming more common along Lake Ontario shore. Purple Finch: in lesser numbers than usual. House Finch: five (male and four young) Frank Clinch Feeder Haley St., Watertown, June 21 (F. Clinch), one male Haley St., Watertown, June 27 (N. Leone), seven

(four young, two adult males and one adult female) same June 27 (N. Leone). Am. Goldfinch: normal numbers. Savannah Sparrow: none reported—usually common in Henderson farmlands. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: two Perch River June 9 (Walkers), one Immaculate Heart School, Watertown, July 16 (N. Leone). HENSLOW'S SPARROW: two Perch River June 9 (Walkers), one near Beaver Meadow July 16, two Immaculate Heart School July 16, five near Beaver Meadow July 21, one same July 27, one same Aug. 4, five Ives Street Rd. Aug. 12 & 13, two same Aug. 22 (all Leone). Vesper Sparrow: two singing males on Hopkinton Breeding Bird Census (VanRiet), one near Henderson June 24, very very low numbers. Field Sparrow: in lesser numbers. White-throated Sparrow: in low numbers—a few on Stony Point—a population separated by normal higher elevation populations. Song Sparrow: numbers down slightly.

Box 139, Henderson, New York 13650

## REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

THEODORE MACK

The weather was rather cold in June with little rain. Lack of rain could be beneficial to nestlings. Some nights brought frost right thru the first week of July when two inches of snow fell on Whiteface Mountain. A local wit said he missed summer last year since it fell on a Saturday when he was out of town. We fared better this year, although my garden was planted four times before the frosts stopped. The last three weeks of July were actually hot. August brought much rain and as usual a cooling feeling of fall by the middle of the month.

The high point of the summer was a banding expedition to Four Brothers Islands in Lake Champlain led by Mike Peterson and made possible by the generosity of Richard Kixmiller who supplied transportation. Volunteers and banders braved stinging nettles, noxious odors, and airborne bird feces to help band 56 Black-crowned Night Herons and 50 Herring Gull chicks. Island C held all the Ring-billed Gulls. 500 chicks were banded there in about an hour. Their defense was to run under nettles and then to regurgitate and excrete dead fish on their captors. The herons hid in nettles and bit on occasion.

Mike Peterson passed on an interesting theory about the Herring Gull defense that is worthy of note. Herring Gull chicks on Monomoy and in other locations run from danger at an early age. They don't on Four Brothers even when practically adult size. These birds were all hidden in thick vegetation to the point that those in grass had the grass grown right over the bird in a thatch. Only the head must have moved in weeks. When returned to the place where found the birds did not run. They usually didn't struggle even when held for banding. Their survival technique was to hold still at all times so that they remained hidden. Mike mentioned that eggers used to plunder the islands and this adaptation may have been the only way a few of the birds managed to survive. This seems to be a good technique there while a Monomoy chick is probably better off to run into a poison ivy tangle.

Contributors: Al Brayton, Geoffrey Carleton, Tom Carrolan, Greenleaf Chase, Charlie

Delehanty, Frits Eckenhausen, Elspeth Johnson, Alice Jones, Ferdinand LaFrance, Ted Mack, Helen Manson, Norman Mason, Larry Master, Karen Mout, Ken McDermott and family, Dorothy McIlroy, Robert McKinney, John "Mike" Peterson, William Peterson, Gary Randorf, William Rutherford, Fritz Scheider, H. Scott, Carole Slatkin, Robert and Mary Sheffield.

**LOONS-DUCKS:** Common Loon: at least three young were on Upper St. Regis Lake; two young were on Sand Lake near Piseco Lake; and adults were noted on Long Lake, Bridge Brook Pond near Tupper, Harris Lake at Newcomb, and Eighth Lake as well as both Ausable Lakes. TC and GR found an adult on Lake Colden July 25. Two Double-crested Cormorants were at Four Brothers June 23. An inland Green Heron was at Chubb River. Three pair of Cattle Egrets had nests with eggs or young at Four Brothers on Island A June 23. Two Snowy Egrets were at the same site but nesting could not be proven. An American Bittern frequented Tupper Marsh and one was at Madawaska. Big Brook near Long Lake also had one. 14 Mallards were at Seventh Lake, some being too young to fly. Adults were at Piseco and Tupper. Two Gadwalls were at Four Brothers June 23. Five Green-winged Teals were at Madawaska July 27. Tons of silt from the prison construction at Ray Brook cannot be helping the vegetation at Oseetah Marsh where Ring-necked Ducks breed. Hopefully the idea of a sewage lagoon next to the brook will be abandoned or we will further degradate a prime habitat. It isn't mandatory that the word "develop" be synonymous with the word "destroy." Somebody with power has to give a damn. The Adirondack Park Agency is working on this. A female Common Goldeneye with eight flightless young was on Bear Pond June 20 (TM, WR). Several females were seen on ponds from Paul Smiths to Saranac Inn. About thirty Hooded Mergansers were seen on various ponds near Paul Smiths. 28 Common Mergansers were on Upper Saranac Lake July 29. They prefer lakes while the Hooded likes smaller water.

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** In July, Major Day Sr. spotted a Turkey Vulture south of Malone. 15 were at Whallonsburg in early Aug. (CS). A Goshawk was at Saranac Inn July 26 and two immatures were at Jay Aug. 9. Sharp-shinned Hawk: eight reported from Indian Lake, Onchiota, Saranac Lake, etc. A Cooper's Hawk was seen sitting in a tree at the usual place at the start of Madawaska Rd. (McD). Red-shouldered Hawk was not reported. Marsh Hawk: one Madawaska July 27 with a large snake; one Tupper Aug. 12 and one near Piseco in late Aug. Osprey: Whallonsburg, Tupper Lake, Onchiota, Upper Saranac Lake, Eighth Lake, Lower Ausable Lake, and Ray Brook impoundment all had summer reports as well as the more usual areas. Am. Kestrel laid the first egg in a Wood Duck box at Whallonsburg and the young were about ready to leave in early Aug. (JP, WP, CS). Turkey was reported from Jay and two Champlain locations. Com. Snipe were indeed common at Big Brook in late June (R & MS). Westport had two Semipalmated Plovers Aug. 19 and a Black-bellied Plover the next day. An Upland Sandpiper was at a Westport field July 15 (TC). There were quite a few Spotted Sandpipers. A Solitary Sandpiper was at Lake Placid July 23 and later several were in Champlain Valley. GC had a Pectoral Sandpiper at Westport Aug. 14. There were two Baird's Sandpipers there on the 19th (EJ, JP). Westport had a Sanderling July 30 (GC). From six on Aug. 14 the Bonaparte's Gulls at NW Bay built up to 44 on the 18th (GC). Six Com. Terns were at Tupper June thru Aug. 13 (CD). Black Tern: 5 adults at Tupper Aug. 3 (McD).

**PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS:** Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one Long Lake June 20 (R & MS); one Paul Smiths June 21 (TM); one Elizabethtown during much of July (JP); one Tupper Aug. 18 obligingly stayed still at 50 feet (CD). Black-billed Cuckoos were widely noted, even one at Little Long Pond in the canoe area June 20 (TM). JP banded a few in the Champlain Valley. A Great Horned Owl and four Barred Owls were at Speculator June 26 (FS, DM). Whip-poor-will: one calling June 29 at Paul Smiths (TM), the first heard here in ten years; two were at the village of Street Road near Ticonderoga July 13 (FL). Com. Nighthawk: two reports of one over the Tupper Lake Grand Union; at least three pairs spent the summer on Brandon Burn at Paul Smiths; a flight of about twenty was headed south over Paul



Smiths in mid-Aug. (WR). Chimney Swifts at Tupper ranged from seven July 28 to 120 Aug. 2 (McD). AB had a Ruby-throated Hummingbird at Seventh Lake that paid considerable attention to an orange life jacket hanging in a tree. It must have looked like some sort of bonanza to a small bird into flowers in a big way. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: a female at Ferd's Bog Aug. 22 and 26 (AB).

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** E. Kingbird: number high. E. Phoebe: about 14 reported. There could be more if nests were checked and the cowbird eggs or young destroyed. Phoebe eggs are white. Throw out the larger mottled egg that is usually there. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: three vocalizing near Saranac Inn in late July (McD); four Mt. Colden July 25 (TC, GR) and one on Wright Peak July 29 (TC); a transient banded at Essex Aug. 18 (CS); one Ferd's Bog Aug. 22 (AB); plus eight other reports mostly from the High Peaks. They are there but are often overlooked or overlistened. Olive-sided Flycatchers were easy to find. Essex had a Horned Lark with young Aug. 7 (FE, KM, JP). Rough-winged Swallow: one at Speculator June 26 (FS, DM); one at Tupper Lake and one at Upper Saranac Lake July 23 (both McD). Gray Jay: one at 3000 feet near Panther Gorge leanto and one on Algonquin July 18 (both TC); one was at Ray Brook July 24 thru Aug. 2 (WP); two at Ferd's Bog Aug. 22 (AB). Com. Raven: 26 individuals from Paul Smiths to Newcomb, the High Peaks and Elizabethtown, which seemed like the same birds were not being recounted. Boreal Chickadees were easy to find both in the High Peaks and in the lower elevation muskeg habitat. McD had 13 at Madawaska one July day. House Wren: four Underwood June 25 and four Speculator June 26. There was even one at Madawaska and three at Indian Lake. Their numbers are high. Winter Wren: max ten Newcomb June 27 (AJ, HM). Brown Thrasher: max seven Tupper June 24 (CD); one at Piseco where not often found. Gray-cheeked Thrush was reported from several high peak summits by TC. Veery: max 46 Speculator June 26. E. Bluebird: pair nested at Tupper, one at Underwood; four at Brandon Burn; six at Onchiota, six at Keene Valley, and two at Newcomb. JP banded a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher near Elizabethtown Aug. 17. TC saw 40 Golden-crowned Kinglets Aug. 9 near Sno-bird leanto in the High Peaks and 60 Ruby-crowned Kinglets July 29 on Wright Peak. Ruby-crowns were also seen in July at Onchiota, Madawaska, Bay Pond, and Ferd's Bog. Cedar Waxwing: max 31 Speculator June 26.

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** A Yellow-throated Vireo was at Speculator June 26 (FS, DM), a good find. Red-eyed Vireo: max 115 Speculator June 26. Philadelphia Vireo: one Underwood June 25 (AJ) and one Newcomb June 27 (AJ, HM); one Ferd's Bog Aug. 27 "with very yellow breast and belly and no wing bars" (AB). Warbling Vireo: one Newcomb June 27 (AJ). This species tends to stay near villages. Black-and-white Warbler: max 12 Newcomb June 27 (AJ, HM). A Golden-winged Warbler female was carefully identified at Onchiota July 25 (McD). Gray back, yellow on forehead, wide yellow wing bar, distinct face pattern in gray noted. This is a Regional rarity. Tennessee Warbler: there were six near Elizabethtown from July 21 to Aug. 17 of which JP banded five. Magnolia Warbler is doing well. R Mc had 20 at Indian Lake June 29 and was not doing an official breeding bird survey. TC reported a few Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers below Panther Gorge leanto about June 8. A female Cape May was at Lake Placid dump July 22 (McD). A male Bay-breasted was at Floodwood July 30 (McD). TC found good numbers of Blackpoll Warblers in the higher elevations. It is good to get reports from climbers. Pine Warbler: three at Upper Saranac Lake July 23 (McD). More than usual Northern Waterthrushes were noted. There was even one at Madawaska July 27 (McD). About a dozen Mourning Warblers were heard or seen which is good. Canada Warbler numbers are good.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS:** This has been the best year in at least ten for Northern Orioles. Most places had one or two and some had many. 18 were banded by JP at Elizabethtown and CS banded 17 near Whallonsburg. Six were at Street Road July 13. Quite a few Rusty Blackbirds were seen including a report from Long Lake. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 15 Speculator June 26; 15 Street Road July 13 feeding on mulberries (FL). Indigo Buntings are the highest in numbers in at least ten years from Speculator to Indian Lake to Paul

Smiths. Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches are in good numbers. A female House Finch was banded Aug. 13 near Whallonsburg (CS). Several small groups of Pine Siskins were seen. Red Crossbills were seen or heard in July from Paul Smiths and Onchiota to Ferd's Bog. White-winged Crossbill: two males, one singing and several other individuals flying were at Chubb River July 21 (mob); one Haystack Mt. Aug. 9 (TC). Rufous-sided Towhee: none at Tupper where there is usually one or two but AJ found one near Adirondack Loj and RMc had one at Indian Lake June 30. The Champlain Valley is more to their liking. Vesper Sparrows were in fair numbers. They have been hard to find in the last few years. Field Sparrows are very scarce. They were absent from some areas that had them last year.

Paul Smiths, New York 12970

## REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

RICHARD P. GUTHRIE

The weather for the Region varied for the period as much as the Region's physiography does. July precipitation in amounts of six inches (15+ cm) fell in areas of higher elevations of Albany, Greene, and Rensselaer Counties. However, most of the Region received three inches (7.6 cm) or less, and the City of Albany had about one inch (2.5 cm) for July. The temperatures varied even more dramatically. A warm start for June was thwarted by a very late frost in widely separated locations later in the month. A low temperature of 28° F (-2° C) was recorded on June 26 in Washington Co. On the other extreme, the high temperature for the period came from both southern Rensselaer Co. and Saratoga Springs with vigor, melting 102° F (39° C) on July 14. The first "cold" front came through the area on July 18, and with it came the first fall migrants, including some recently fledged Swainson's Thrushes into the Hudson Valley. Did they come all the way down from the mountains, or did they originate in the lowlands nearby?

Favorable trends noted from the reports received are the continued comeback of the two smaller accipiters and the Red-shouldered Hawk. Also encouraging is the widespread repopulation of Turkey in the Region, as evidenced in part by the record take by hunters during the Spring season which ended in early June. On the topic of mixed blessings is the woeful loss of our white ash trees along the bottomlands. This loss should, however, provide ample nest site opportunities for Red-bellied Woodpeckers. The apparent spread of the mysterious maple wilt through our sugar maples should likewise benefit the Red-headed Woodpeckers in the uplands. Finally, the spread of the practice of early June mowing of hayfields as advocated by agricultural advisors such as Cornell Cooperative Extension, will most likely abet the decline of the grassland sparrows such as Vesper, Henslow's, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows, as well as Bobolinks, and perhaps Short-billed Marsh Wrens.

Contributors whose observations are reflected, with thanks, in this report are: Ken Able, William Able, Arlene & Tom Brown, Jim Bush, Paul Connor, Bill Cook, Juanita Cook, Rena Dodd, Kate Dunham, Barbara & Hugo Gardina, William Gorman, Elisabeth Grace, Monte Gruett, Andrew Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, Carolyn & Ron LaForce, Bob Marx, Tom Palm-

er, Al Schroeder, Tommy Williams, Hudson Winn, and Robert Yunick.

Abbreviations used in this report are: BBS—Breeding Bird Survey, Col.—Columbia Co., HR—Hudson River, JL—Jenny Lake, NB—New Baltimore. The BBS run this year were: Catskill (observer JB), Cobleskill (KA), Ballston Lake (AS), Duanesburg (BM), Medusa (RG), North Easton (WG), North River (RG), Plattecove (RG), Petersburg (HW), South Berne (KA), and Ghent (MG).

**LOONS—DUCKS:** Com. Loon: one Alcove Reservoir June 21. Double-crested Cormorant: along HR thru period; max 40 Imboct Aug. 19. Great Blue Heron: one S. Berne BBS; three Medusa BBS; three Cherry Plains June 17. **OLDSQUAW:** one female swimming rapidly northward in HR at NB during a driving rainstorm July 18 (RPG).

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Goshawk: reports from Cherry Plain and Helderbergs June & July. Sharp-shinned Hawk: one Plattecove BBS seen carrying a Starling; also NB thru period. Cooper's Hawk: one each Cobleskill and Medusa BBS; also Chatham and Castleton reports. Red-shouldered Hawk: three N. River BBS; and three other reports. **BALD EAGLE:** one adult over Catskill June 25 (JB). Marsh Hawk: Aug. 5, 13 & 26 Castleton (JC). Osprey: June 16, 30 & Aug. 13, 26 HR at Castleton (JC). Turkey: large group (60-80) with many juv. in trees at Schoharie July 4; also flocks reported from Col. June & Aug. Sora: one July 22 Rensselaer (PC). Com. Snipe: June 29 thru Aug. 30 Col. & Rens. Co. Short-billed Dowitcher: one Aug. 4 Mohawk River (C & RLaf). **SANDERLING:** one Churchtown Pond Aug. 9 (A & TB). Bonaparte's Gull: four HR at NB Aug. 12.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Black-billed & Yellow-billed Cuckoo: both seem to be maintaining their recent gains. Barred Owl: normally heard at JL thru summer, but absent this year (RPY). Red-bellied Woodpecker: nesting in dead ash by Roeliff Jansen Kill, Angram June 9 (RPG). Red-headed Woodpecker: two June reports from Colonie, and reported again at Stuyvesant. Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers: reported in approximately four to one ratio on BBS.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: seven banded late Aug. at NB. Willow Flycatcher: Cobleskill (one) and N. Easton (two) BBS; at Papscanee Cr. 12 on June 3, and 14 on July 22 (PC). Alder Flycatcher: three S. Berne BBS, only report. Oliv-sided Flycatcher: one S. Berne BBS. Tufted Titmouse: poorly reported despite recent range expansions. Swainson's Thrush: none on BBS, early migrants at NB July 24. Golden-crowned Kinglet: two Cherry Plains July 29—migrants?

**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** Yellow-throated Vireo: seems to be doing well with numerous reports of pairs throughout the Region including the higher elevations. **PHILADELPHIA VIREO:** two Coeymans Aug. 30 (AG & TW). Groups of warblers began moving through JL July 13 (RY). The first noticeable migrants through the lower elevations came a week later. Warblers of note reported this season are: **PROTHONOTARY:** the male that had the light socket in the truck garage in Chatham staked out finally left on June 9. Blue-winged: more widespread and numerous than usual; nine banded at NB, Tennessee: one early migrant banded at NB Aug. 23. Ovenbird: noticeable increase in birds banded at JL with two to three times the number compared to recent years (RY). Canada: reported from their usual mountain haunts; three banded NB Aug. 11-28.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS:** Rose-breasted Grosbeak: mixed reports, some say numbers down in Col.; R. Yunick banded more than in each of the last two years at JL. Purple Finch: R. Yunick reports double broods at JL; first brood fledged early by July 1; second brood was more successful and fledged by Aug. 16; 64 were banded on Aug. 17. Evening Grosbeak: first report Aug. 30 at Coeymans. Pine Siskin: interesting reports of four at Guilderland June 1 thru 20; also, one each Medusa and N. River BBS. Savannah Sparrow: a strong 13 found on the Cob BBS and five on the NE survey; a healthy enclave exists on the Coxsackie Flats as well. Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows: no reports. Vesper Sparrow:

a small cluster of about five pairs were located in Northern Col. Co. (TP); other reports are from Chatham and Ghent. White-throated Sparrow: 18 N. River BBS; seven Platte BBS and three each from S. Berne and Medusa BBS.

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## REGION 9 – DELAWARE-HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

June was unnaturally cool, with temperatures ranging largely from the 50's to the 70's ° F. July remained cool till mid-month when it turned seasonally hot and remained so through the rest of the period. Rains were evenly scattered throughout the period, with any prolonged droughts avoided. Reservoirs and streams remained high with minimal exposure of shoreline, but shorebirds made a good appearance anyhow. Stewart Airport, our recently found mecca for shorebirds, is all but destroyed for birding with construction and runway extension taking place, but a few species did show up there. Shorebirds were well reported from Dutchess and Westchester from mid-July to the end of the period.

Florence Germond of Dutchess Co. was tending some 117 bluebird boxes this season with 57 of them occupied. More than 235 young were raised successfully. Twenty-three pairs lost young or abandoned the nest, and triple nesting was attempted in three boxes with two pairs bringing off 12 young each. "Congratulations, Florence!"

Bob Deed thought for a while that he had the first successful nesting of Prothonotary Warblers in Rockland County, and the Region for that matter. A pair was behaving that way in the Hackensack Swamp west of Nyack for several days in early June. Before he could find the nest, a nearby sewage line ruptured, pouring millions of gallons of raw sewage into the swamp on June 22, and he never saw them again after that date.

Contributors and observers cited: John Benzinger, Al Brayton, Tom Burke, Robert F. Deed, Florence Germond, Fred Hough, Ken McDermott, John C. Orth, Eleanor Pink, Benton Seguin, Robert Speiser, John Tramontano, Ed Treacy, Marion van Wagner, Berna Weismann, Leona Wilson.

Abbreviations: CB—Cornwall Bay; CP—Croton Point; MC—Marshlands Conservancy; PP—Piermont Pier; PL—Playland, Rye; SA—Stewart Airport; Dutch—Dutchess Co.; Oran—Orange Co.; Rock—Rockland Co.; Ulst—Ulster Co.; West—Westchester Co.

LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: three imm on Ashokan thru mid-June (AB). Double-crested Cormorant: more reports than usual, scattered along the Hudson from Esopus to the southern border of the Region. Max of 50 off Scarboro, West at end of the period. Little Blue Heron: one imm at CB July 22 (BS). Great Egret: the usual Aug. influx, most along the Hudson with few inland reports. Snowy Egret: similar to the former species, but in much fewer numbers. Black-crowned Night Heron: max six imm at PP July 17. Yellow-crowned Night Heron: a few at PL and MC, with about eight young raised. Am. Bittern: one at Stissing Aug. 21 was early. Glossy Ibis: one CP July 10 was the only report. Canada Goose: exc numbers thru period, but increases of recent years seem to be leveling off. SNOW GOOSE:

all records Dutch, six reports of single birds each, possibly the same bird. Pintail: one female at Mygatt Pd, Dutch Aug. 28 was very early. Green-winged Teal: five Dover, Dutch Aug. 19 were early. Blue-winged Teal: occasionally summers and breeds. One PL June 17 and six Kingston Pt. Aug. 13. Canvasback: one seen irregularly at PL June 7 thru 22 was very unusual.

**HAWKS—ALCIDS:** Turkey Vulture: common in the highlands, but this season was seen regularly in the lowlands of Rock and West near the Hudson. **BLACK VULTURE:** one Bashakill June 10 (BS). Goshawk: a pr fledged two young near Pound Ridge, West. Cooper's Hawk: one Aug. 8, Washington Lake, Newburgh (BS). Red-shouldered Hawk: more reports than usual, but no evidence of breeding. **BALD EAGLE:** one ad in Dutch July 6 (Barbara Ryan). Marsh Hawk: one imm hunting around the dump at CP was probably an early migrant. Osprey: at least two reports of summering birds, one at CB and another at Hackensack Swamp Rock. **MERLIN:** one Washington L. Newburgh Aug. 10 (BS). Ruffed Grouse: numbers good, reported regularly, JO had two young in July and again in Aug. near his home in Wawarsing. Bobwhite: all reports Dutch, continues to hold on in the Verbank area and two or three other locations. Turkey: a pr during June at Millbrook was the only report. Clapper Rail: at least three were heard thru June at MC. Virginia Rail: one imm at MC July 13, and another, apparently a different one, July 29. Semipalmated Plover: four Wappingers L. Aug. 11, 12, one CB Aug. 13. Killdeer: max 48 Blue Chip Farm, Wallkill; and 40 SA July 28. Am. Golden Plover: arr SA Aug. 22. One to four thru end of period there. **WHIMBREL:** two at PL July 28-29 were unusual there. Upland Sandpiper: at least six at Blue Chip Farm June 30. Migrants arr SA July 18, max 25 Aug. 16. Solitary Sandpiper: first three in Dutch Aug. 15 and two at Kingston Point Aug. 17, several others thereafter. Greater Yellowlegs: unusual conc of 20 at SA Aug. 12. Pectoral Sandpiper: 15 Wappingers L. Aug. 12, 21 SA Aug. 13, decreased to three by Aug. 18. Least Sandpiper: first CB Aug. 13. Max ab 50 at CP Aug. 31. Semipalmated Sandpiper: two at PP July 17, max 170 CP Aug. 25. Western Sandpiper: only report two CP Aug. 25. **MARBLED GODWIT:** a first for Dutch. Seen by many on June 3 at Sharon Station. Sanderling: three CB Aug. 13. **AVOCET:** first West record, one in breeding plumage at CP Aug. 25 (BW, Stan Lincoln). Great Black-backed Gull: the most common gull on the Hudson at Cornwall for the period. Laughing Gull: only one or two obs at PP thru early July, then in smaller numbers than usual thru rest of period. In mid-Hudson region numbers were normal with 10 to 12 found at CB or Conn's Hook, Highland Falls. Bonaparte's Gull: one Aug. 28 at Bannerman's, one on the Hudson in Dutch. Another, probably the same bird, at Cornwall Aug. 30. Com. Tern: numbers severely down on the lower Hudson in Tappan Zee where they are usually quite common in late summer. None at Nyack and none at CP thru period. One at Kingston Point Aug. 25 was the only report. Black Tern: one at Ashokan June was probably northbound, two at Kingston Point Aug. 25 were southbound. Black Skimmer: one at MC June 17.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Mourning Dove: numbers continue good, but no large concentrations. Largest was 20 to 30 on Aug. 13 at Clinton Corners. Cuckoos: both species in good numbers with Yellow-billed far outnumbering the Black-billed. Barn Owl: four July 31 at Beacon were reported to have been there since April. Great Horned Owl: one on Jack Orth's barn in Wawarsing Aug. 15-16. Short-eared Owl: one flushed at MC July 28. Com. Nighthawk: a better migration than usual. Maxima were: 693 over Rye Aug. 30; 210 in Dutch Aug. 28; more than 100 over Armonk Aug. 30. Many other reports of smaller flocks during last week of period. Chimney Swift: more than 100 at P'kpsie Aug. 17. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max ten at North Bay, Cruger's I. Aug. 30 (AB). Good reports of single birds and as many as three at feeders in Dutch. Red-bellied Woodpecker: continues to increase, but slowly. Three on Breeding Bird Survey in Bedford-Pound Ridge, West area were the first for that count.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** Acadian Flycatcher: missing from many of its haunts of recent years, but numbers still good. Reported from most counties. Willow Flycatcher: numbers excellent. Many field trips reporting six to ten indiv. thru period. Alder Fly-

catcher: much smaller numbers than previous species, but still well represented. Olive-sided Flycatcher: seems to arr earlier each year with the first on Aug. 10 at Wawarsing. Eleven different obs there thru end of period. Rough-winged Swallow: a small colony nesting in Hackensack Swamp thru June until a flood submerged half the nest holes. Cliff Swallow: singles obs at MC July 7 and 29 are unusual there. Thirteen active nests obs on Croton Dam June 20. 72 active nests counted at Ashokan July 1. Disappeared from the Woodcock Mt. Rd. nest site at Washingtonville where they nested for a number of years. Blue Jay: JCO reports numbers down in the Wawarsing area. No nesters observed. Almost normal elsewhere after a bleak winter and spring. **COM. RAVEN**: one at entrance to Minnewaska St. Pk June 20 (Hans Weber). Fish Crow: now a well-established breeder at Hackensack Swamp West Nyack after 50 years of being confined to the Hudson R. marshes. Reported nesting in the Kingston Pt. area this year. Red-breasted Nuthatch: reported on west shore of Sterling L, Oran June 29 and two at Cedar Pd. Sterling Forest June 30 (JB). Another at the Conference Center, Sterling L July 4 (RS). Brown Creeper: colony at Kensico Res. not located this year. Carolina Wren: numbers low but hanging on. Long-billed Marsh Wren: numbers low at CP, but still a few there. **SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN**: one well-observed and described at Kripplebush Aug. 9 (FH). First record for Ulst. Hermit Thrush: a small colony numbering about five birds were at Pound Ridge in early July. E. Bluebird: (see introductory notes). Golden-crowned Kinglet: exc reports this season. Singles and pairs reported from several upland localities. Nested at Pound Ridge, with two fledged young being fed on July 4 and 8, one at Ashokan June 3, a pair obs feeding a juvenal at Black Rock Forest, Cornwall July 5 and 7. The latter pair were probably the same birds obs July 15 by KM and party. Probably the first breeding record for Oran.

**VIREOS-WARBLEDERS**: White-eyed Vireo: absent from most of its usual locations in Rock. Solitary Vireo: more summer records than usual. Two singing birds at Pound Ridge June 24, one remained thru July 8, two Black Rock Forest July 15 may very well have been summer residents. No breeding proven. An adult feeding two young near the nest with a singing adult nearby were observed June 5 south of Island Pond, Harriman St. Pk (JB). **PHILADELPHIA VIREO**: one Aug. 16 at Pleasant Valley was unusually early (MVW). Worm-eating Warbler: a rare summer resident on higher hillsides, three July 15 Black Rock Forest. First migrant at Wawarsing Aug. 8. "Lawrence's" Warbler reported again this summer from Croton and Ardsley. Tennessee Warbler: first migrant at Wawarsing Aug. 10. In good numbers in Dutch Aug. 30, 31. Nashville Warbler: one singing near Dismal Swamp, Harriman Pk. June 5, and another near Spruce Swamp in Sterling Forest June 6 (JB). Cape May Warbler: first migrant Aug. 21 at Dover, three others in Dutch till end of period. Yellow-rumped Warbler: one ad and one imm at Winding Hills Pk. Oran Aug. 22, early (KM). A summer bird was found on the west shore of Sterling L. June 29 by JB. Remained thru July 4, but no breeding evidence obtained. Cerulean Warbler: located in four different areas in the hills west of Nyack (RFD). Usual birds scattered along Mine Rd. USMA on June 9, two at Bashakill June 10 (BS). **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER**: a single bird found June 13 on West Shore Rd. Sterling L., remained only a few days (RS, JB). Pine Warbler: obs regularly from Apr. to Aug. Probably nesting in the pine woods near JCO's home in Wawarsing. One singing near Spillway Bridge, Ashokan, June 26 was still there July 1. Prairie Warbler: at least six singing on Mine Rd., USMA June 9. Northern Waterthrush: a single bird near Dismal Swamp Harriman Pk June 5. **KENTUCKY WARBLER**: two separate indiv found near Siscowit Res. in Pound Ridge June 17. One female at Long Swamp, Sterling Forest July 3, 5. (RS, JB). Mourning Warbler: one at Rye June 1 was a northbound migrant. A pr of nesting birds were obs near the summit of Balsam Lk. Mt. in the Catskills June 10 and July 7. Six others were obs on the latter date with two carrying nesting materials, and one with food in its bill (AB). Yellow-breasted Chat: a pr obs in Purchase feeding a young cowbird June 30. Another pr thru June at Bashakill. Hooded Warbler: two from late June thru late July at Black Rock Forest, Cornwall. Canada Warbler: first at Wawarsing Aug. 14.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolink: numbers down. First migrants at CP Aug. 25. Max 50 there Aug. 31. Orchard Oriole: more reports than ever before. Noted on at least six different reports. Nesting prs in Purchase June 10 and Stanfordville in June. Young fledged at the latter location June 28. Indigo Bunting: scarce at Stanfordville, but remains high along Mine Rd. USMA. JCO reports numbers high at Wawarsing. House Finch: exploding! JCO reports that two or three at his feeder in early Aug. inc to 50 or more by the end of the month. Rufous-sided Towhee: reported missing at Woodstock but normal elsewhere. Grass-hopper Sparrow: four near Galeville Airport June 30, and six at Bashakill June 10, three at Stewart Airport July 29. Sharp-tailed Sparrow: a few bred again at MC.  
Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

## REGION 10 - MARINE

BARBARA J. SPENCER

Following a mild and wet spring, the summer was nearly normal in temperature without any prolonged hot spells. Rainfall was less than normal with about half the expected amount of precipitation. The weather did not appear to interfere with avian activities throughout the period.

### Ospreys

Such was not the case for Ospreys which nest earlier, with their eggs pipping during the second week in May. That period saw heavy rains; large nests twenty to thirty years old on Gardiner's Island were half full of water according to Dennis Puleston. Due to the weather, relatively poor success resulted from a promising start, with many failed nests due to chick mortality. On Gardiner's Island nineteen chicks fledged from twenty-eight nests, compared with thirty-two fledged last year. Plum Island birds were more successful with seventeen young reared from nine nests. The westernmost nest, at Connetquot, fledged two young. A new nest at Caumset, on the north shore on Lloyd's Neck, failed because of the weather.

An Osprey nest platform program initiated by Paul Stoutenburgh on the north fork attracted five new nests which unfortunately failed early, with the chicks dead. Stoutenburgh has developed a simple method for building nest platforms using four-inch galvanized irrigation pipe as support. His method does not require heavy equipment to erect the posts and the pipe guards the nest from predation by raccoons. It is planned to use his methods to erect nest platforms in areas around Mill Neck and Center Island where Ospreys have bred historically. Stoutenburgh would be pleased to share his technique with anyone interested in building platforms.

### Eaton's Neck's Least Tern Colony

As far as it is known, the Least Tern colony on Eaton's Neck is the largest on the eastern seaboard. The terns experienced a successful breeding season this year; little predation was evident with only a few dog tracks indicating any disturbance of the terns. Six hundred Least Tern chicks were banded, representing only a portion of the chicks hatched. A minimum of one thousand pairs of

Least Terns must be here. Two hundred Common Tern chicks were also banded. Both aerial and ground counts have been made for several years and the data will be published at a later date. Sallie Ruppert, Bill Kolodnicki, and other members of Huntington Audubon have been instrumental in preserving and enhancing this unique colony situated in a location frequented by pleasure boaters and subject to intense pressure.

#### Breeding Bird Surveys

Three June bird counts were conducted again this year: Captree for the eighth year, Northern Nassau for the sixth, and Central Suffolk for the fifth consecutive year. The Captree count totaled 118 species (127 last year) with Hooded Warbler, Rusty Blackbird and Blue Grosbeak new to the count. Numbers of Common Terns (5000) were down from last year's high of 6000, yet equal to the previous high in 1974. Over 200 Roseate Terns and 550 Least Terns were reported. Other birds of interest included one Chuck-will's-widow, three Acadian Flycatchers, four Brown Creepers and one Ruby-throated Hummingbird, a very rare breeder on Long Island.

The Northern Nassau count circle produced 113 species, about average for the area. (The high was 138 species in 1977.) New to the count was Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Kentucky Warbler and Hooded Warbler. A high count of 583 Ring-billed Gulls, even allowing for some duplication, greatly exceeds the previous high of 68 found last year. Since most Ring-billeds in the area in the summer are in their second year, this number must reflect breeding success of the previous summer. Laughing Gulls were also high with 208. The previous high was 90 last year. Carolina Wrens increased to three individuals, perhaps on their way to recovering from two harsh winters. Rough-winged Swallows were very low with only two individuals. The previous range was 11 to 22. Other negatives included only two Eastern Meadowlarks and an absence of Grasshopper Sparrows from their "last" breeding place for the second year.

As part of the Northern Nassau count the village of Sea Cliff was carefully censused for the fifth year. Comparisons for a five year period are shown in the following table:

Common Species in Sea Cliff over Five Years

	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Mourning Dove	85	36	30	27	40
Blue Jay	88	43	30	54	69
Common Crow	23	8	14	26	30
Tufted Titmouse	8	2	5	6	15
Mockingbird	15	19	19	18	19
American Robin	198	122	71	115	110
Starling	237	161	125	189	238
House Sparrow	328	310	212	311	325
Northern Oriole	21	13	10	13	12
Common Grackle	168	102	60	83	115
Cardinal	61	44	49	57	41
House Finch	76	27	39	75	53
Song Sparrow	18	3	6	16	15



Several species show "U" shaped curves with numbers returning toward the 1975 high counts this year. Mockingbirds remain stable as do several other species. These figures suggest that we should not over interpret losses or gains from year to year; these changes may only be short-term phenomena in a relatively stable environment.

The Central Suffolk count produced a total of 133 species, typical for the area. Of these, 113 breed in the area, about eight others breed elsewhere on Long Island. Over a five-year period 178 species have been found, of which 143 breed on Long Island. New to the count were Solitary Vireo, Summer Tanager, Little Blue Heron, Greater Yellowlegs, Barn Owl, and Yellow-breasted Chat. The compiler noted that the previously declining Bobwhite, Brown Thrasher, and towhee numbers showed modest upward trends. Titmouse, Mockingbird, and House Finch numbers have stabilized. Hummingbirds and rails were either low in numbers or hard to find with only one Clapper Rail, one Virginia Rail, and one Ruby-throated Hummingbird reported. Other species showing declines included Ring-necked Pheasant, Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Carolina Wren, Veery, Starling, Chestnut-sided Warbler, House Sparrow, American Goldfinch, and Field Sparrow.

#### Colonial Bird Survey of Hempstead Bay

Conservation biologist John Zarudsky supplied the following data compiled by the Department of Conservation and Waterways 1979 colonial bird survey of the marsh islands of Hempstead Bay. Observers were J. Browne, W. Overton, and J. Zarudsky.

#### Heron Colonies

	<u>Louisiana Heron</u>	<u>Little Blue Heron</u>	<u>Green Heron</u>	<u>Black-crowned Night Heron</u>
Lawrence Marsh	1	1	2	34
Pearsall's Hassock	1	6	3	19
Pine Marsh			3	17
Smith Meadow			3	8
Jones Island			2	17
Jones Beach				13

#### Estimated Number of Breeding Pairs

	<u>Yellow-crowned Night Heron</u>	<u>Snowy Egret</u>	<u>Great Egret</u>	<u>Cattle Egret</u>	<u>Glossy Ibis</u>
Lawrence Marsh	10	17	4		30
Pearsall's Hassock		92	11	1	100
Pine Marsh	1	34			42
Smith Meadow		11	2		28
Jones Island	1	10			3
Jones Beach		12	29		30

#### Estimated Number of Breeding Pairs

Tern and Skimmer Colonies

	<u>Common Tern</u>	<u>Least Tern</u>	<u>Gull-billed Tern</u>	<u>Black Skimmer</u>
S. Green Ledge	8		1	
Black Banks Island	57			
North Line Island	30			20
Nassau Beach		23		
Cinder Island	94		1	
East Channel Islands	167		1	

Estimated Number of Breeding Pairs

Gull Colonies

	<u>Herring Gull</u>	<u>Great Black-backed Gull</u>
Pearsall's Hassock	198	11
N. Black Banks	88	
West Meadow	125	
Meadow Island N.	228	1
Meadow Island S.	83	1
Alder Island S.	188	1
Jones Beach	400	8

Estimated Number of Breeding Pairs

Clapper Rail Nesting Densities—1979

Marsh Island	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>No. of Breeding Pairs</u>	<u>Acres per Nest</u>	<u>Nests per Acre</u>
Alder Island	98.0	3	32.7	.03
High Island	57.7	2	28.8	.03
False Channel Meadow	37.0	4	9.3	.11

Cox's Ledge Pelagic Trips

The sighting of a Yellow-nosed Albatross August 21 by Tom Davis stimulated a series of trips by birders aboard the Viking Starship in hopes of a repeat performance. While no albatross was found, a nice sampling of the birds present in the area was made. It should be understood that there is no intent to annex Cox's Ledge to New York State. However, historically Region 10 birders have made this run because the cod fishing boats out of Montauk go there. The consistency of the route provides useful comparative data about offshore bird populations that is not available with as much regularity from any other area. It also should be noted that for the purpose of New York State listing, both Block Canyon, the target of recent Federation pelagic trips, and Hudson Canyon are in New York State waters as described by the New York State Avian Records Committee.

The July third total of 980 Cory's Shearwaters was impressive as they continued a recent trend toward arriving earlier in our area.

## Cox's Ledge Pelagic Trips -- 1979

<u>Species</u>	<u>June 16</u>	<u>July 3</u>	<u>Aug. 18</u>	<u>Aug. 21</u>	<u>Aug. 25</u>	<u>Aug. 26</u>	<u>Aug. 29</u>	<u>Sept. 1</u>	<u>Sept. 2</u>
Yellow-nosed Albatross				1					
Cory's Shearwater	15	980	335	400	290	400	106	175	296
Greater Shearwater	35	695	40	32	265	50	11	1	13
Sooty Shearwater	19	16	1	4	3	3	3	1	1
Manx Shearwater	1	2	3	6	3	2	3		3
Wilson's Storm Petrel	112	74		440	75	150	18	45	60
Gannet	1			2		2			
Red Phalarope					1				2
Northern Phalarope			1		4	7		28	2
Unidentified Phalarope			4			3	5	20	
Pomarine Jaeger			4	4	4	2	4	1	3
Parasitic Jaeger			1		4			1	1
Unidentified Jaeger						4	7		
Sabine's Gull			1						
Black-legged Kittiwake									1
Arctic Tern							3		

Observers: June 16, THD *et al.*; July 3, P. Bernath; Aug. 18, BJS; Aug. 21 THD *et al.*; Aug. 25, BJS, JA, P. Polshek, H. McGuinness; Aug. 26, TWB *et al.*; Aug. 29, APC, R. Miller, J. Greenlaw *et al.*; Sept. 1, P. Tozzi *et al.*; Sept. 2, THD, BJS, L. Bevier *et al.*

In general, shorebird migration, underway by June 26th, was normal although Black-bellied Plovers and Red Knots were in lower numbers than usual. Terns had a successful breeding season on Long Island in most locations. Some "southern" species are showing increases in the area, marked by a breeding record for Prothonotary Warbler, and an apparent breeding of Hooded Warbler. Yellow-breasted Chats registered a sharp rebound from low numbers of recent years, and White-faced Ibis and Boat-tailed Grackles may have bred in the area this year.

Rarities include: Magnificent Frigatebird, White-faced Ibis, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, Sandwich Tern, Boat-tailed Grackle.

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

Contributors and initialed observers: Robert Adamo, Jim Ash, Richard Berger, Thomas W. Burke, Ralph Cioffi, Arthur P. Cooley, Michael Cooper, Thomas H. Davis, Stephen B. Dempsey, Joseph DiCostanzo, Frances File, William Kolodnicki, William Lamoureaux, Anthony J. Lauro, Millard Lindauer, Emanuel Levine, Alan Lindberg, Dennis Puleston, Glenn Quinn, Gilbert S. Raynor, Sallie Ruppert, Norma Siebenheller, William Siebenheller, Barbara J. Spencer, Paul Stoutenburgh, John Zarudsky.

**LOONS-DUCKS:** The Long Island Sound area was "invaded" by **MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRDS** this summer with several individuals involved. An immature was seen June 30 at Three Mile Harbor (M. Ash); a bird of unspecified age or sex was at Orient Point Aug. 11 (S. Hollander *et al.*), Aug. 21 an adult female was seen at Great Gull Island (JDiC *et al.*), while on Aug. 28 an adult male crossed Cold Spring Harbor (*vide* SR). A Cattle Egret was seen at Jamaica Bay Aug. 16 (GSR). A high count of 120 Snowy Egrets feasted on an eruption of bait fish on the east side of Hempstead Harbor July 28, an unprecedented number for this area (RC, BJS). An adult **WHITE-FACED IBIS** was seen June 10 through the period at Jamaica Bay (THD, G. Tudor, M. Monnier, *et al.*). Details will appear in a future issue of *The Kingbird*. Two adults were seen together here Aug. 5 and thereafter. Did they breed at nearby Ruffle Bar? Eleven **FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCKS** traveled around the south shore; they were seen June 26 thru July 5, and July 19 thru 28 at Jamaica Bay (M. Hemmerick, P. W. Post, *et al.*), June 28 at Pearsall's Hassock (P. Buckley), and July 16 at Tobay Pond (R. Laskowski).

**HAWKS-ALCIDS:** A **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** was clearly seen at close range June 12 at Great Neck (R. Berger, J. Apostorelis). The previously reported **MISSISSIPPI KITES** were last seen June 9 at Moravian Cemetery on Staten Island (NS, WS). An immature Goshawk was unusual on Great Gull Island Aug. 23 (JDiC). A Cooper's Hawk was a summer resident again at Muttontown (BJS, AL). No nest has been found although an immature bird was seen last summer. Red-tailed Hawks remained in good numbers in Suffolk County. Broad-winged Hawks continue in small numbers in Nassau and Suffolk counties, and at least a pair was present on Staten Island. A pair of adult Bald Eagles was seen June 6 at LaTour-ette Golf Course, Staten Island (M. & G. Kleinbaum). Immatures were seen July 27 at Jamaica Bay (S. Birnbaum), at Cold Spring Harbor sporadically from Aug. 3 through Aug. 26 (*vide* SR), and Aug. 24 on Great Gull Island (JDiC). A Common Snipe Aug. 11 at Upton was early (GSR). An amazing flock of 110 Whimbrels was seen from the boat while the observers were returning from Cox's Ledge Aug. 26 (TWB). Summering Purple Sandpipers were at Jones Inlet Aug. 29 (L. Bevier). A Baird's Sandpiper arrived July 31 at Jamaica Bay (D. Reipe). Three different Curlew Sandpipers appeared at the East Pond at Jamaica Bay; one was present Aug. 15 thru 31, one Aug. 17 thru 31, while a third bird was seen Sept. 3. Twenty adult Long-billed Dowitchers were along the shore of the East Pond Aug. 18 (THD). The first Buff-breasted Sandpiper was seen at the west end of Jones Beach in Aug. (EL). A

maximum of three Marbled Godwits were on the Line Islands July 28, two were at Shinnecock Aug. 14 (GSR), while a third was present at Jamaica Bay the latter part of August. A maximum of 15 Hudsonian Godwits were present at the Line Islands July 28. A Reeve was found at Jamaica Bay June 30 (THD). The same bird plus another Reeve and a Ruff were found July 1 in the same location. A Ruff was seen there July 14 (TWB) and July 31 (P. Baicich). An American Avocet June 7-8 at Jamaica Bay was a rare spring occurrence. Wilson's Phalaropes were at Jamaica Bay July 2 (A. Gilbert, M. Singer) and July 14 to 15; one was at Moriches Inlet Aug. 5 (GSR), and another was seen in the sewage ponds at Pilgrim State Hospital Aug. 13 (MC). A Northern Phalarope was feeding in the surf at Quogue Aug. 23 (APC), and one was present the last week in Aug. at Jamaica Bay. A second year Black-headed Gull was found at the Oak Beach Marsh July 1 (AJL). About six pairs of Laughing Gulls appeared to be nesting at the east end of Jamaica Bay, away from the refuge; one nest was found (P. W. Post). Record numbers of Laughing Gulls summered in Long Island Sound. An immature kittiwake was unusual in the summer at Sagaponak Aug. 28 (H. McGuinness). A Royal Tern was unexpected June 16 on the Central Suffolk count (GSR); Royals are regular from Shinnecock to the Mecox area later in the summer. An immature and an adult SANDWICH TERN were discovered Aug. 9 at Mecox (L. Johnson) and seen in the area off and on through the period. A Caspian Tern, rare in summer, was at Jamaica Bay July 8. A movement of Black Terns was noted at sea and from the beaches in the Mecox area during the last ten days of Aug. with 20 individuals in the surf at Mecox, and other groups at Sagaponak and other stops.

**PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS:** Both cuckoos were present in good numbers through the period. The Central Suffolk count reported 29 Yellow-billed and 13 Black-billed Cuckoos, Northern Nassau had 45 Yellow-billed Cuckoos, more than double the previous high count, and 12 Black-billed Cuckoos. A calling Chuck-will's-widow in Riverhead July 13 represented a new location for this species (M. Hemmerick). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds remain a very rare breeding bird with only three individuals located. Red-bellied Woodpeckers seem to be increasing in the Northern Nassau count circle with 14 individuals present where eight or nine are usually recorded.

**FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS:** The expected scattering of Acadian Flycatchers was located in June with no evidence of breeding. An Alder Flycatcher calling at Montauk June 9 was unusual (GSR). Rough-winged Swallow numbers seem to be drastically down on the north shore with only two found where 11 to 22 is the usual range. A Cliff Swallow was seen Aug. 16 in East Hampton (RA). Tufted Titmouse numbers were usual for recent years in northern Nassau with 62 recorded. Red-breasted Nuthatch, with four recorded in northern Nassau, was about average. One was seen at Upton June 20 (GSR). Four Brown Creepers in Connetquot reflect a small but stable breeding population. White House Wrens are fewer in number in north shore areas, their expanding numbers in Connetquot have been aided by nest box projects intended to provide for Eastern Bluebirds (WL). Carolina Wrens appear to be making a modest recovery from their winter-reduced numbers, but they remain scarce away from Gardiner's Island. A Hermit Thrush in Forest Park Aug. 31 may have been one of a small number that breed at Connetquot and elsewhere farther east on Long Island (L. Bevier). A calling Swainson's Thrush was present through most of June in Glen Cove (AL). Bluebirds, usually present in small numbers in Connetquot, were unseen this year despite careful monitoring and repair of nest boxes by volunteers. Tree Swallows are the major users of the boxes, while poorly planned "bird houses" put up by well-meaning school or scout groups can be used only by House Wrens (WL). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are rare and sporadic breeders on Long Island. A nest was found at Yaphank, one at Flanders with a family group of four or five seen June 10, one was in Manorville July 11, and two at Tobay Aug. 10 (all GSR). Three were found at Connetquot on the breeding census.

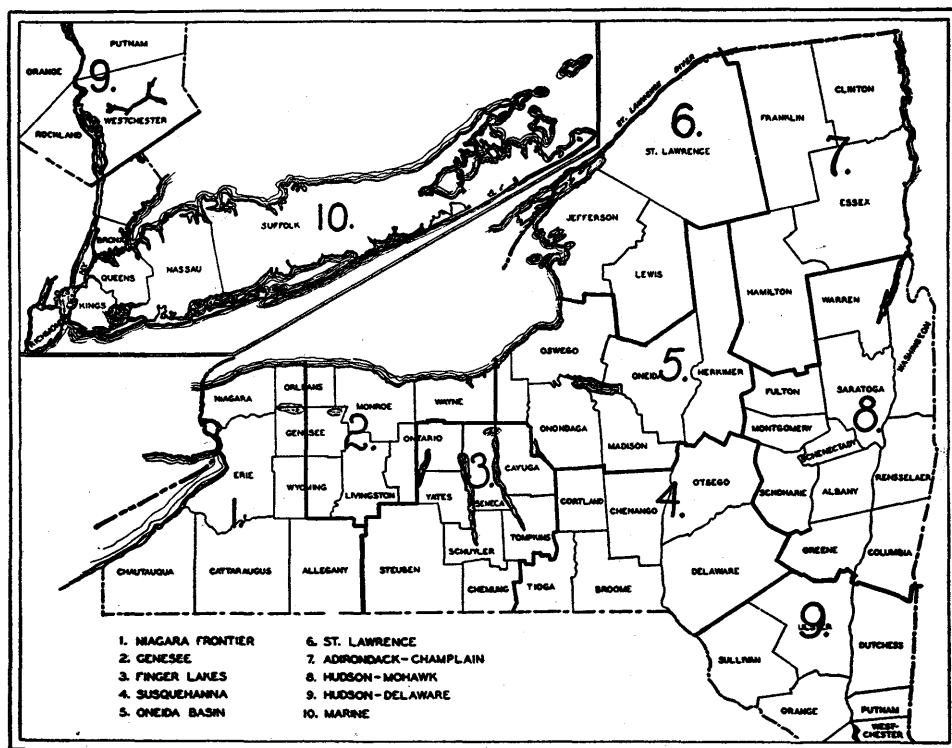
**VIREOS—WARBLERS:** A Yellow-throated Vireo was singing in Manorville June 25 to July 28 where one is present nearly every summer. No evidence of breeding has been seen

(GSR). This species was unreported elsewhere and remains a very rare breeder on Long Island although it may exist in some inaccessible privately owned areas on the north shore. A Solitary Vireo June 16 to 17 at Mastic Beach was out of season on Long Island (T. Johann). A pair of Prothonotary Warblers nested successfully in Nissequogue, details elsewhere in this issue (M. Wheat). A singing Tennessee Warbler was late June 10 at the LaTour-ette Golf Course on Staten Island (G. Tudor). A Cerulean Warbler was unusual in fall migration in Forest Park (L. Bevier). Louisiana Waterthrushes start to migrant early. One was in a yard on Staten Island July 26 (NS, WS), and another was seen at Upton Aug. 18 (GSR). A third was netted Aug. 30 in Manorville (GSR). Two Kentucky Warblers were seen on the Central Suffolk count (GSR), two were in Forest Park Sept. 1 (THD, L. Bevier), and a female was netted on Great Gull Island Aug. 31 (JDiC). An early Connecticut Warbler was at Jamaica Bay Aug. 31 (R. Cook). Yellow-breasted Chats are making a comeback in Region 10: two territorial pairs were present on Staten Island (NS, WS), two were on the Central Suffolk count, four were reported from at least three northern Nassau locations; three birds including two singing males were on territory in Muttontown but evidence of nesting was not found (AL). A singing male was present at Montauk June 9 (GSR), and another bird was seen at Poxabogue Aug. 28 (RA). A pair of Hooded Warblers was on territory at Muttontown, and seen carrying food, yet no nest could be located.

**WEAVERS—SPARROWS:** Orchard Orioles seemed in better numbers than recently with seven on the Central Suffolk count and five in Northern Nassau, including a pair on location in Glen Cove for the third year (RC). **BOAT-TAILED GRACKLES** probably nested on Pearsall's Haddock although conclusive evidence was not found. Two males and three females were seen June 9; two of the females appeared recently fledged although they remained hidden and were poorly seen. A female was reported there June 28 (P. A. Buckley). Two male Summer Tanagers were seen late May to mid-June in Mastic (L. Commerford). A singing male was present at Manorville July 4 thru 6 (GSR). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks appear to be spreading as a breeder in central and on the south shore of eastern Long Island. Formerly they were present only on the north shore and the northern part of the south fork (GSR). A sub-adult male Blue Grosbeak was seen at Floyd Bennett Field June 19 (J. Ash, P. W. Post). A pair of White-throated Sparrows were on territory in Sands Point but no nest could be found (GQ).

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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**John J. Elliott Memorial Committee:** John L. Bull, Eugene Eisenmann,  
John Farrand, Jr., Emanuel Levine, Joseph W. Taylor

**Finance Committee:** William Vaughn, Chairman; John Forness, Richard A. Sloss

**Lillian C. Stoner Fund Committee:** Richard A. Sloss, Chairman;  
John Confer, William Reeves

### *Elected Committees*

**Auditing:** Irving Cantor, Donald Clark

**Nominating:** Stephen Dempsey, Chairman; Gordon Meade, Bill Lee