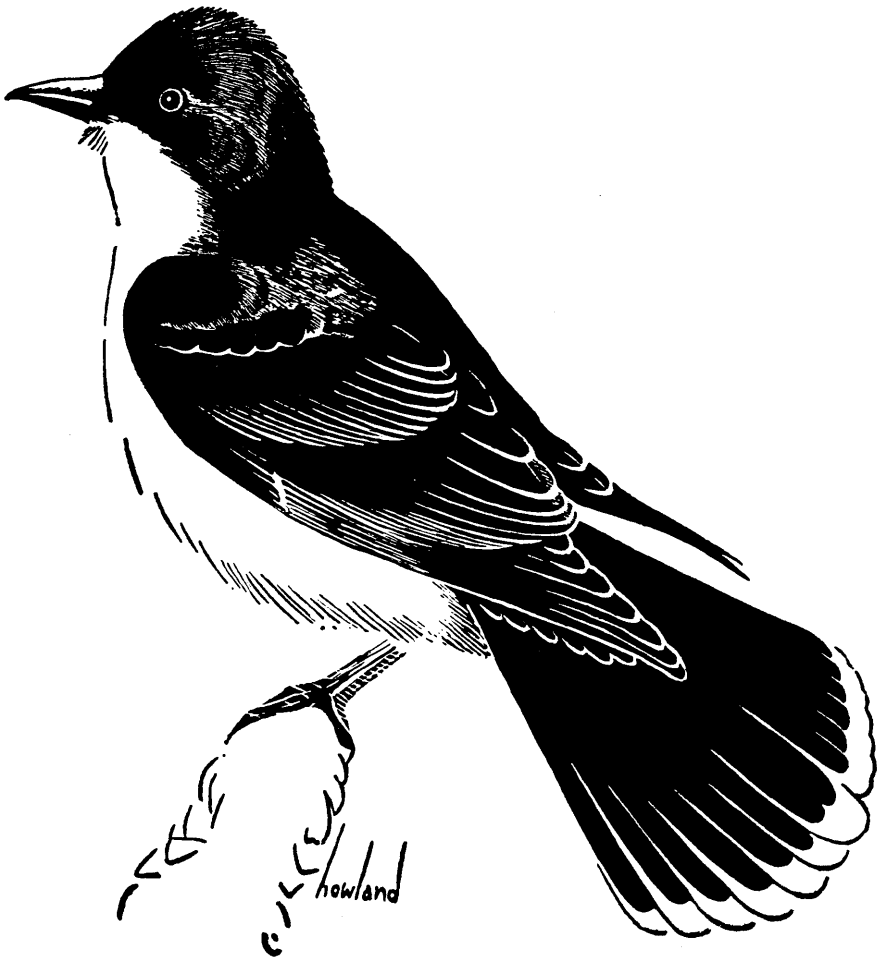
The KINGBIRD



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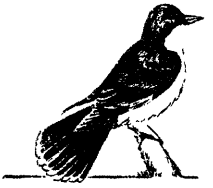

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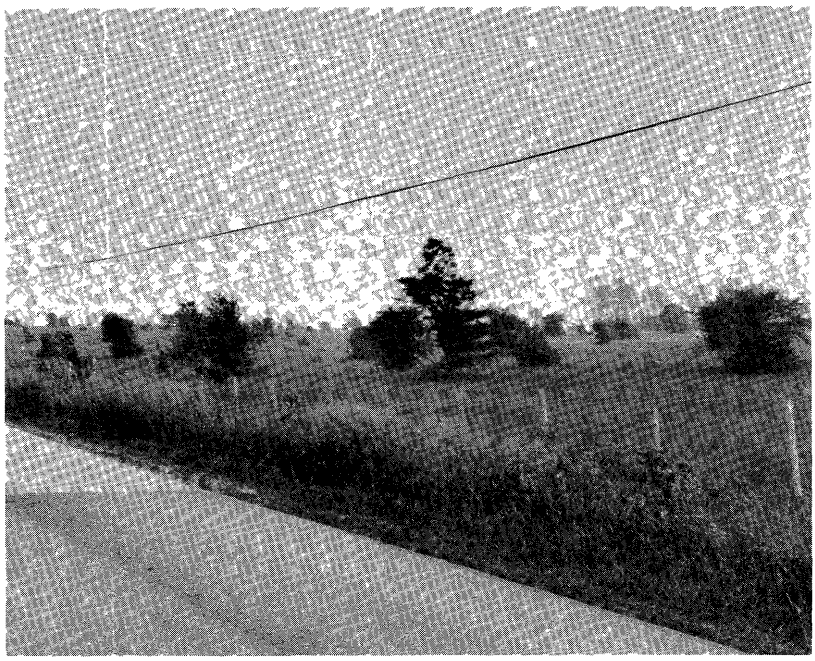

Habitat of Loggerhead Shrike in Franklin Co., New York.

POSSIBLE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DISTRIBUTION, STATUS AND ABUNDANCE OF THE LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*LANIUS LUDOVICIANUS*) IN NEW YORK STATE

PAUL NOVAK

The Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) is known to most birders for its peculiar habit of impaling prey on thorns and barbed wire. Its range extends from southern Canada to Mexico and from coast to coast. The species has experienced a significant population decline in many regions, including the northeast (Milburn 1981) and now is listed as Endangered in New York State. The reasons for its decline are unknown. Many factors have been suggested, including loss of habitat (Graber *et al.* 1973, Kridelbaugh 1983), contamination by pesticides (Anderson and Duzan 1978, Busbee 1977), competition with other species for food and nest sites, changes in regional weather patterns and even accidental death along roadways. In this paper I discuss each of these factors in relation to observations made at two Loggerhead Shrike nest sites in New York during the 1986 breeding season.

In his early account of the *Birds of New York,* Eaton (1914) described the Loggerhead Shrike as a species which moved into the state and gradually increased in numbers with the clearing of the land for agriculture, suggesting that the species originally was not present in New York State. Eaton considered 1869 to be the year of the first confirmed Loggerhead Shrike nesting in New York. He suggested that earlier reference to nesting Northern Shrikes (DeKay 1844) should be attributed to the Loggerhead Shrike. The following information make it likely that DeKay's observations represent a case of mistaken identity.

Prior to the description of three eastern subspecies of the Loggerhead Shrike (Palmer 1898) and the subsequent taxonomic revision by Miller (1931), there was confusion over the identity of all North American shrikes. Both shrike species may be present in New York during the early spring, as Loggerhead Shrikes arrive from the south to begin breeding activities before all Northern Shrikes depart for their breeding grounds farther north. This situation, if present in the 1800's, would have been an additional source of confusion for early ornithologists. A set of six eggs in the collection of the New York State Museum collected on 11 May 1902 was labeled "Northern Shrike" by the collector, William Conway. I examined these eggs, along with all other eggs and nests of both species in the collection. Size comparison indicates that the eggs are those of a Loggerhead rather than a Northern Shrike.

Regardless of its original status, the Loggerhead Shrike was considered to be a common breeding bird in western and central New York from the late 1800's through the first quarter of the twentieth century

(Bull 1974). A progressive decline in numbers occurred during the 1930's and 1940's (Bull 1974) and has continued to the present. The New York State Breeding Bird Atlas Project produced just ten records of confirmed breeding for this species during the time period 1980-85 (Janet Carroll *pers. comm.*).

Several states, including New York, recently have initiated projects to study potential causes of the shrike decline. I surveyed 57 locations for the presence of Loggerhead Shrikes between 1 May and 19 August 1986, including all ten locations where breeding was documented during the atlas project. Just two pairs of nesting shrikes were located during this search, both in Franklin County. Intensive observations were made at these nest sites on a weekly basis throughout the summer.

Loss of habitat has been cited as a factor in the decline of the Loggerhead Shrike by many authors (Graber *et al.* 1973, Kridelbaugh 1983, Bull 1974). Bull (1974) describes pastureland with an abundance of hawthorn and orchards as the two preferred breeding habitats of shrikes in New York. At both active nest sites located during my survey, the habitat was an active pasture of approximately 40 acres, with associated fencerows separating the pasture from adjacent agricultural land. Both pastures were dotted with widely scattered hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.) shrubs four to twelve feet in height. Several of the breeding locations identified by the atlas project were in similar active pasture situations, while one of the records is from an orchard with surrounding farmland and three records from western New York are from an area with multiflora rose hedgerows bordering open fields, corn fields and pasturelands. In general, relatively open areas with the presence of thorny shrubs for impaling stations seem to be required by Loggerhead Shrikes in New York. Cadman (1985) describes similar habitat preferences in Ontario.

As a predator which feeds upon small vertebrates and large insects, the shrike occupies a position near the top of food webs. Hence, shrikes are prone to accumulate residues from toxic chemicals, which have been shown to have severe effects on breeding success of other predatory birds, such as the Peregrine Falcon and Bald Eagle. Using Loggerhead Shrike eggs from Illinois, Anderson and Duzan (1978) found that eggshells were significantly thinner in 1971-72 than they were in 1875-1895. They also found an average concentration of 21.89 ppm DDE in 69 shrikes collected during 1971 and 1972. Contaminants can affect birds directly as well. In a laboratory study Busbee (1977) found that with levels of 2 ppm Dieldrin in their diet, all young shrikes in his study died within 103 days. Although DDT and Dieldrin are no longer in use, the potential effects of the pesticides which have replaced them are unknown. At one of the two sites studied this summer, both adults and the recently fledged young frequently were observed foraging along the edges of cornfields adjacent to the pasture. Corn fields

in New York are often treated with pesticides such as carbofuran, parathion and Diazinon. At the second nest site a single addled egg was collected from the nest two weeks after the other eggs had hatched. The egg will be analyzed to determine if it contains toxic residues.

Hedgerows, fences, telephone poles and electrical wires provide ideal hunting perches and serve to attract shrikes to roadways. Accidental death along roadways has been ranked as a major cause of mortality in shrikes, especially fledglings (Cadman 1985) and has been suggested as a factor in the decline of the species in the northeast (Bull 1974). The considerable increase in traffic since the early 1930's is likely to have increased the danger from automobiles (Cadman 1985). One or two road killed shrikes were found in each of several years at the Sawyer Road atlas location in Orleans County in western New York (Bob Spahn *pers. comm.*). The shrikes at one of the two sites studied this past summer frequently foraged from power lines and fenceposts alongside the road and were often observed flying low across the road and dropping beside prey at the road's edge. On several occasions I observed the fledglings at this site picking insects off the road surface, and on 7 July they were even fed by an adult while sitting in the middle of the road. While none of the shrikes at this site was killed by passing vehicles, the potential impact of road kills on shrike populations which are at low densities should not be overlooked.

The American Kestrel, European Starling and Eastern Kingbird all have been noted as species in apparent competition with shrikes. Cadman (1985) suggests that competition with starlings for food may have reduced shrike numbers. European Starlings probably take many of the same insects as do shrikes and starling populations in agricultural areas throughout the northeast have steadily risen over the past several decades. Dead elm trees in hedgerows and forest edges adjacent to agricultural land provide a multitude of nest sites for this prolific species. At my study sites many starling pairs had raised one brood successfully and had started on a second clutch by the time the young shrikes were preparing to leave the nest. By midsummer flocks of 30-50 starlings were foraging throughout the territories of both families of shrikes. Shrikes egest small pellets similar to those produced by owls, which contain undigested bones and insect parts useful in food habits determinations. Eight pellets were collected this summer. Gross inspection revealed that they were composed largely of the undigested wing parts of various beetles. Food habits information may prove useful as a guide to sampling the prey populations on which shrikes depend and may allow us to assess the degree to which an expanding starling population has affected shrike numbers.

Recent evidence suggests that changes in climatic trends should be investigated as a potential factor in the decline of the Loggerhead Shrike.

The Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*), a European species which occupies a niche similar to that of the Loggerhead Shrike in North America, has undergone a gradual decline in Britain during the past 70 years (Bibby 1973, Peakall 1962). Bibby (1973) and Peakall (1962) consider an "adverse climatic trend" as one of the major factors in the decline. They suggest that cooler and wetter summer weather decreases the availability and numbers of large flying insects and beetles which comprise the shrikes' main prey (Bibby 1973). In a two year study in Missouri, Kridelbaugh (1983) documented the loss of eight of 28 shrike nests under observation during a year of heavy rainfall and cold temperatures. Just one of 27 nests was lost due to this cause during the less severe weather the previous year. One of the two pairs of shrikes under observation in New York State this summer experienced a nest failure early in the nesting season. While the behavior of the adult shrikes on 21 May seemed unusual for birds with a completed nest, it was not until several weeks later, when I discovered a completed second nest, that I confirmed the pair had been unsuccessful in their first nesting attempt. It is possible that several consecutive days of hard, cold rain in the area between 15 and 21 May were responsible for the initial nest failure. Cold, wet weather may also lead to a reduction in brood size (Cadman 1985). It is notable that several of the breeding bird atlas records were observations of adults with just two fledged young (Janet Carroll *pers. comm.*). Only five young shrikes were successfully fledged from the two nest sites studied this summer.

Observations such as those reported here are necessary in order to determine habitat requirements, productivity, food habits and other basic aspects of Loggerhead Shrike biology. Such information is essential to assess the possible role of the many factors which may be involved in the widespread decline of this unique species.

Acknowledgments

I thank William Brockway and Gus Smythe for allowing me access to their land throughout the summer. I also thank Charles Smith and Milo Richmond for reviewing this paper, Peter Nye for encouragement during the field season, and David Steadman for permission to examine shrike nests and eggs in the collection of the New York State Museum. The majority of projects of the Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Fish and Wildlife Endangered Species Unit are funded by "Return a Gift to Wildlife." I thank the contributing taxpayers who make possible the work of the Endangered Species Unit.

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The Division of Fish and Wildlife of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Cornell University have entered into an agreement which will provide for continued study of the Loggerhead Shrike in New York for the next two years. Birders throughout New York State may play an active and important role in this study by providing assistance in locating and observing nesting shrikes. Volunteers will be sought for several mass searches for Loggerhead Shrikes during the breeding season in selected areas, and a statewide system for reporting observations of any Loggerhead Shrikes will be established. Member clubs of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs and all Breeding Bird Atlas Project participants will be receiving details concerning the searches and the reporting system in upcoming months. Anyone with information concerning active, or recently active nest sites of Loggerhead Shrikes in New York should contact Paul Novak at 306 Fernow Hall, Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853.

Room 306 Fernow Hall, Department of Natural Resources,
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853

NEW YORK STATE WATERFOWL COUNT, JANUARY 1986

WALTON B. SABIN

The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., held the 1986 winter Waterfowl Count from 11 January through 19 January, with 12 January as the target date. All Regions completed their counts within the established dates. The count period this year again was mild and most bodies of water were open and occupied by waterfowl. Exceptions are frequently found at or near Lakes Erie and Ontario, where snowfall and/or icing conditions can be expected to the exclusion of virtually all other areas. None of the Regional coordinators felt that their reports were less than expected. In fact the reports were so large that the grand total count established a new high of 295,437 (Table I), up 23.3% over 1985, and up a terrific 43.7% over the thirteen year average (1973-1985) of 205,661.

Comparing 1986 to 1985 count figures (Table II), the commoner species showed increases for all listed species except Brant, scaup and Common Goldeneye. When comparing 1986 count figures with the 1973-1985 thirteen year average (Table III) we find the same three species showing decreases.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's midwinter inventory, all geese in the Atlantic Flyway (Maine to Florida) were down 3% from 1985. Even though Canada Geese were up 11%, this gain was offset by losses of Brant (−25%) and Snow Geese (−47%). There was an encouraging turn around for dabbling ducks, which had a 12.2% increase. American Wigeon on the Atlantic Flyway showed a gratifying increase of 19.4% over 1985, but is still at only 58.2% of the most recent ten year average (1976-1985). This species bears watching even though there has been an improvement. Diving ducks as a group almost held their own, and were down less than one percent from 1985 for the Atlantic Flyway. In contrast to the ducks, American Coot were down 26%, with 78.8% of the population wintering in the states of Georgia and Florida.

The Department of Environmental Conservation 1986 aerial survey was completed on schedule from 2 January through 15 January. Good weather and favorable flying conditions permitted the survey to be completed without a hitch for the first time since 1983. The results are presented in Table IV. Table V compares 1985 to 1986 aerial survey results. The figures from the Federation's ground count as compared

to NYSDEC's aerial count has all the appearance of not having been conducted at the same time or even in the same state! The so widely (wildly?) divergent figures and trends just point out the futility of trying to make meaningful comparisons of the two methods.

The 1987 Federation Waterfowl Count dates are from 10 through 18 January, with Sunday, 11 January, as the target date.

I wish to thank the upwards of one hundred observers who participate each year. A special thanks also to the regional compilers who coordinated all those volunteers. An extra special thanks to Alan Reckhow, coordinator for Region 1, who has retired. A warm welcome to Marie Wendling, the new Region 1 coordinator. The regional compilers were:

Region		Region	
1	Marie Wendling	6	Lee Chamberlaine
2	Warren Lloyd	7	John Peterson
3	Eric Donohue	8	Paul Grattan
4	Leslie Bemont	9	Edward Treacy
5	Fritz Scheider	10	Stephen Dempsey

652 Kenwood Avenue, Slingerlands, New York 12159-0044

Table I. Regional totals for 1986 Waterfowl Count

Species	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5
Red-throated Loon		1			1
Common Loon		1	9		4
Pied-billed Grebe	12		9		3
Horned Grebe			18		24
Red-necked Grebe					4
Great Cormorant					
Double-cr. Cormorant		1			1
Tundra Swan					
Mute Swan		1	2		
Snow Goose			1		
Brant			1		
Canada Goose	478	18	29,986	2	1,934
Wood Duck		8	2		6
Green-winged Teal				2	
American Black Duck	339	84	669	125	683
Mallard	7,438	1,741	2,360	604	2,859
Mallard X Black Duck		4	14		4
Northern Pintail	1				12
Blue-winged Teal					
Northern Shoveler					1
Gadwall	2	8	53		8
Eurasian Wigeon					
American Wigeon	4		1	1	
Canvasback	1,710	65	1,663		36
Redhead	91	35	7,481		10
Ring-necked Duck	2	1	30		1
Tufted Duck					
Greater Scaup	1,850	1,709	352		1,901
Lesser Scaup	46	14	8		9
scaup, species			2,227		
Common Eider					
King Eider					1
Harlequin Duck					
Oldsquaw	1,739	878			133
Black Scoter					1
Surf Scoter	1				
White-winged Scoter	383	101	4		7
scoter, species					
Common Goldeneye	1,557	1,682	368	51	1,710
Barrow's Goldeneye		1			
Bufflehead	103	143	183	8	164
Hooded Merganser	8	3	46		27
Common Merganser	4,996	1,122	57	44	856
Red-br. Merganser	14	437			49
Ruddy Duck					
American Coot	37		753		
unidentified			23		
Total	20,811	8,058	46,320	837	10,449

Table I. Regional totals for 1986 Waterfowl Count

Species	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Region 9	Region 10	Total
Red-throated Loon					95	97
Common Loon		2			16	32
Pied-billed Grebe				2	16	42
Horned Grebe		1			251	294
Red-necked Grebe					10	14
Great Cormorant					200	200
Double-cr. Cormorant					84	86
Tundra Swan					2	2
Mute Swan			2	316	1,234	1,555
Snow Goose			1	1	40	43
Brant					7,602	7,603
Canada Goose		436	1,575	9,278	43,848	87,555
Wood Duck	2	1	1	1	6	27
Green-winged Teal					321	323
American Black Duck	124	346	1,578	427	18,113	22,488
Mallard	142	400	2,742	2,594	13,040	33,920
Mallard X Black Duck		1			28	51
Northern Pintail		3		2	385	403
Blue-winged Teal					1	1
Northern Shoveler					67	68
Gadwall				9	591	671
Eurasian Wigeon					4	4
American Wigeon			1	9	1,485	1,501
Canvasback		1	170	3,558	4,756	11,959
Redhead			2	1	221	7,841
Ring-necked Duck				76	100	210
Tufted Duck					1	1
Greater Scaup		5	22	50	27,556	33,445
Lesser Scaup				1	1,492	1,570
scaup, species			2	4	5,460	7,693
Common Eider					89	89
King Eider					1	2
Harlequin Duck	1	1			2	4
Oldsquaw	220				1,016	3,986
Black Scoter					366	367
Surf Scoter					192	193
White-winged Scoter					21,003	21,498
scoter, species					3,115	3,115
Common Goldeneye	2,600	1,385	75	55	1,512	10,995
Barrow's Goldeneye	1					2
Bufflehead	2	16		86	4,331	5,036
Hooded Merganser	1	1	3	13	459	561
Common Merganser	12,000	278	380	1,479	15	21,227
Red-br. Merganser	4		3		5,899	6,406
Ruddy Duck				36	560	596
American Coot				33	683	1,506
unidentified					132	155
Total	15,097	2,877	6,557	18,031	166,400	295,437

Table II. Comparison of 1986 with 1985 for all species totaling over 1,000 individuals in 1985.

Species	1986	1985	% change from 1985
Mute Swan	1,555	1,063	46.3
Brant	7,603	16,402	-53.6
Canada Goose	87,555	48,839	79.3
American Black Duck	22,488	18,624	20.7
Mallard	33,920	29,367	15.5
American Wigeon	1,501	1,519	-1.2
Canvasback	11,959	7,673	55.9
Redhead	7,841	4,358	79.9
scaup (both species)	42,708	52,815	-19.1
Oldsquaw	3,986	9,532	-58.2
scoter (all species)	25,173	8,730	188.4
goldeneye (both species)	10,997	12,233	-10.1
Bufflehead	5,036	5,290	-4.8
Common Merganser	21,227	13,612	55.9
Red-breasted Merganser	6,406	3,984	60.8
American Coot	1,506	1,159	29.9
Total	291,461	235,200	23.9

Table III. Comparison of 1986 count with 1973-1985 average for all species totaling over 1,000 individuals in 1986.

Species	1986	Average	% change
Brant	7,603	11,377	-33.2
Canada Goose	87,555	29,300	198.8
American Black Duck	22,488	18,476	21.7
Mallard	33,920	21,552	57.4
American Wigeon	1,501	2,152	-30.3
Canvasback	11,959	11,751	1.8
Redhead	7,841	6,405	22.4
scaup (both species)	42,708	61,305	-30.3
Oldsquaw	3,986	3,430	16.2
scoter (all species)	25,173	9,939	153.3
Common Goldeneye	10,995	11,776	-6.6
Bufflehead	5,036	4,424	13.8
Common Merganser	21,227	12,430	70.8
Red-breasted Merganser	6,406	1,617	296.2
American Coot	1,506	1,886	-20.1
Total	289,904	207,820	39.5

Table IV. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Aerial Count, 2-15 Janurary 1986. All species of 1,000 individuals or more.

Species	Upstate	Long Island	Total
Mute Swan	108	1,114	1,222
Brant		4,503	4,503
Canada Goose	39,557	5,508	45,065
American Black Duck	2,768	11,930	14,698
Mallard	6,823	3,005	9,828
Canvasback	4,950	2,173	7,123
Redhead	3,774		3,774
scaup (both species)	5,565	10,652	16,217
Oldsquaw	2,527	2,320	4,847
goldeneye (both species)	4,237	852	5,089
merganser (all species)	18,510	4,282	22,792
Total	88,819	46,339	135,158

Table V. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation 1985 and 1986 Aerial Counts compared, with percent change from 1985 for all species with 1,000 individuals or more in 1985.

Species	1986	1985	% change
Mute Swan	1,222	1,464	-16.5
Brant	4,503	8,715	-48.3
Canada Goose	45,065	52,565	-14.3
American Black Duck	14,698	21,691	-32.2
Mallard	9,828	13,294	-26.1
Canvasback	7,123	9,410	-24.3
Redhead	3,774	9,059	-58.3
scaup (both species)	16,217	39,704	-59.2
Oldsquaw	4,847	1,699	185.3
scoter (all species)	427	4,041	-89.4
goldeneye (both species)	5,089	13,739	-63.0
Bufflehead	927	1,421	-34.8
merganser (all species)	22,792	18,376	24.0
Total	136,512	195,178	-30.1

DOWNY WOODPECKER REWARD RATES FROM GOLDENROD GALL INSECTS

JOHN L. CONFER[1], CATHY J. HIBBARD[2] and DANA EBBETS[1]

Field studies of Downy Woodpeckers (*Picoides pubescens*) foraging on the insects in goldenrod galls have reached several conclusions. The Downy Woodpecker prefers to use the exit tunnel prepared by the larvae of the fly *Eurosta solidaginis* to extract the larva (Moeller and Thogerson 1978, Confer and Paicos 1985). They prefer to chisel into galls which contain the larger fly larva rather than galls which contain smaller predacious insects or no insect at all (Schlichter 1974; Moeller and Thogerson 1978, Confer and Paicos 1985). Galls in which the fly larva has been preyed upon by other insects lack an exit tunnel (Uhler 1951). Confer and Paicos (1985) proposed that the Downy Woodpecker is more likely to abandon a gall if unable to locate the exit tunnel.

In these previous field studies, the authors speculated that the Downy Woodpecker's behavior might enhance the rate of obtaining food as follows. Extraction of the fly larva through the exit tunnel requires only locating the tunnel and a peck through the plant epidermal cells covering the tunnel, which may be faster than chiseling a conical hole through the entire gall wall. Abandoning galls when an exit tunnel is not found and, thus, when the gall is more likely to contain a predacious insect may enhance the reward rate, since the predacious insects weigh about ⅛ as much as a fly larva. In this study the reward rates for these behaviors were observed with a caged Downy to test if these speculations were correct.

Methods

An after-hatch-year male Downy Woodpecker was caught in November 1983 and retained in a 1.2x1.2x2.4 m flight cage. Data were obtained on 15 dates from 11 January to 20 March 1984. On non-experimental days the bird received about 10 meal worms (*Tenebrio*) daily with an *ad libidum* supply of beef suet, sometimes supplemented with nuts and twice with an orally injected drop of cod liver oil. On experimental days the bird was allowed to feed for about 0.5 hour after emerging from its roost cavity which occurred about 0.5 hour after dawn. After *ad libidum* feeding the suet bag was removed and the bird fasted for about an hour before being tested. Goldenrod stems with a gall were inserted in holes in a board suspended from the cage ceiling. The stems with galls used on any one date were randomly selected from a large group of galls picked in late fall from one field. Usually two consecutive sets of eight galls each were rapidly attacked by the woodpecker. Observations were made from inside my home (JC) through a window about

seven m from the cage. Each hole was numbered, and movement on/off each gall was described into a tape recorder with the elapsed time transcribed later. The contents of each gall were examined after the trial. We used the descriptions of Uhler (1961) to determine if the gall had contained a fly larva or one of the predacious insects, *Eurytoma obtusiventris, Eurytoma gigantea,* or *Mordellistena unicolor* from the condition of the cavity. The average fly larva weight (0.041 g) exceeded that of the predators, all of similar size (0.005 g), by about 8-fold.

Terms and definitions used for this study follow. *Attack initiated:* bird landed on stem, moved up to gall and pecked at gall surface. The bird occasionally would land on a stem without pecking at a gall, which was not counted as a feeding event. *Abandoned:* bird left gall after only pecking at the surface. *Chisel new hole:* bird made a new hole that reached the central cavity of the gall. *Enlarge exit tunnel:* bird located the exit tunnel prepared by the fly larva and enlarged this slightly. *Success:* extraction of a larva was assumed when no larva was found in the gall after the Downy chiseled a hole and the cavity was not completely occluded with resin as occurs if a larva dies during the plant's growing season. *Time:* measured in seconds, was the sum of all time at a gall; it occasionally included repeated visits. *Reward rate:* the weight of insects obtained by a specified feeding behavior prorated to 1 hour, and expressed as a percentage of the Downy Woodpecker body weight of 28 g.

Results

Usually the woodpecker would begin foraging on the galls within seconds of the time the observer backed away from the cage. Occasionally data would be obtained on 16 galls in barely more than a 0.5 hour. Thus, these data may resemble foraging behavior of a hungry Downy Woodpecker in the field, but some influence of confinement is probable.

The woodpecker pecked downward or horizontally so that it had access to the upper half and midline of the gall, which usually included the area with the exit tunnel. The exit tunnel underlies about 1-2% of the searched plant surface, yet 30% of all fly larva extracted by the caged woodpecker were obtained through the exit tunnel, compared to 53% in field surveys (Confer and Paicos 1985). Frequent use of the small entrance to the tunnel, which is covered by plant epidermal cells, implies that the Downy Woodpecker searches for the exit tunnel. Searching is implied also by the bird's initial behavior at a gall. The woodpecker tapped at all accessible portions of the gall by stretching its neck. If the bird did not begin to strike strongly while at its first location on the gall, the bird would move its feet around the gall midline and tap at all newly accessible portions of the gall. This repositioning sometimes occurred 2-4 times before the bird struck strongly enough that chips of the gall were torn away.

Table 1. Predation on goldenrod gall insects by a caged Downy Woodpecker. Numbers represent frequency of occurrence or calculated values as defined in text.

	Fly Larvae			Other Larvae		Sum
	All	Exit	New Hole	All	New Hole	
No. Initiated	106			110		216
No. Abandoned	6			17		23
No. New Hole or Enlarged Exit		30	70		93	193
Percent Success	92	100	97	43	52	75
Mean Time (s)	101	51	131	64	75	84
Reward Rate (%/h)	4.8	10.3	3.9	0.43	0.50	2.6

The frequency of abandonment (Table 1) was low but was significantly greater (Chi-square = 5.74, $p < 0.05$) with galls containing the predacious insects (16%) than with galls containing the fly (6%). Field surveys showed a similar, 3-fold difference in the ratio of these percentages, but the absolute rate was twice as great (Confer and Paicos 1985). The caged woodpecker never abandoned a gall if the epidermal cells over the exit tunnel were punctured (30 galls). If the woodpecker failed to locate an exit tunnel (186 galls), then 12% were abandoned. The time spent on galls that were abandoned was brief; less than 10 seconds on 14 galls, less than 20 seconds on an additional six galls and less than 30 seconds on three other galls.

By far the greatest reward rate, 10% of the body weight per hour, occurred when a fly larva was extracted through the exit tunnel (Table 1). The time required was short, the success was 100%, and the reward is large. Chiseling a hole in a fly gall required considerably more time than enlarging the pre-existing tunnel (Table 1), and had a slightly lower success rate with a resultant reward rate of 4%. Reward rates from the other insects were considerably lower, 0.43%. This low reward rate results both from the lesser weight of the predacious insects and also from the lower success in extracting the larva from the frequently occluded cavity (Table 1).

When the Downy chiseled a new hole, he behaved differently when on galls with fly larva than when on galls containing the smaller insects. The woodpecker spent 131 seconds (standard error = 5.0) chiseling a new hole into a gall with a fly but spent only 75 seconds (standard error = 3.4) on a gall with predacious insects. The lower success of extracting predacious insects compared to the fly probably is due, in part, to the reduced effort. In addition, resin frequently occluded the center of the cavity containing predacious insects. In some instances

inspection of the cavity after the woodpecker was done suggested that even a major effort would not have enabled the woodpecker to extract the larva. The central cavity of a gall containing a fly larva always is completely open and the success rate for extracting the larva is very high (97%). Thus, the longer time which a woodpecker takes to extract the fly larva is balanced by the larger reward and a nearly perfect success, resulting in a reward rate of 3.9% (Table 1). The woodpecker abandons the other insects sooner, perhaps because the potential reward is smaller and because failure to extract the insect is inevitable for many galls despite any amount of effort. This minimizes further, possibly fruitless effort. The result is a reward rate of 0.5% (Table 1).

Implications

Previous field data (Confer and Paicos 1985) showed that Downy Woodpeckers frequently abandoned galls when the exit tunnel wasn't located. This abandonment improves the rate of obtaining food because chiseling a hole takes much more time and often results in obtaining either the small predacious insects or nothing at all. On the other hand, the caged bird showed considerably more persistence than was shown by the field data. He usually chiseled a new hole even in galls with the smaller insects. Consequently, he obtained lower reward rate than he would have if he had frequently abandoned galls when the exit tunnel was not located. Our caged bird, which seemed to act hungry, adapted a strategy which yielded a high percentage of the available food. Perhaps Downy Woodpeckers optimize for maximum rate of reward in the field when many galls are available and for maximum amount of reward in the cage when only 8 galls were available at a time.

Lima (1984) demonstrated that Downy Woodpeckers learned to change foraging strategy in a way that enhanced the reward rate as the distribution of an artificial food resource was changed. This study showed three foraging features that enhanced the reward rate and may be learned: the search for the exit tunnel; the higher rate of abandonment of galls lacking an exit tunnel than the rate for galls with the large fly (even though the overall rate of abandonment was low); and the greater time spent chiseling a new hole in fly galls compared to predacious-insect galls. Studies with young, naive Downy Woodpeckers might reveal if these behaviors are inate, or transferred from some other experience, or learned by feeding on goldenrod galls.

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RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD NESTING PATTERNS IN A SMALL MARSH IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

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Introduction

Numerous studies have been published concerning the nesting patterns of Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoenicus*). Most of these studies have reported on marshes or upland areas of 1 ha or larger. This paper reports on a 0.037 ha marsh with a dense concentration of nests and a very successful hatch and fledge rate.

Study Site

The marsh, with an area of 370 m^2 covered by cattails (*Typha* sp.), is located in Tompkins County, New York, 8 km northeast of Dryden (Fig. 1). Water covered about 320 m^2 of the marsh in mid-May with a maximum depth of 60 cm and no open water. The marsh is near the south edge of a 3 ha meadow. Homes lie about 200 m to the north and south. There are raccoons, dogs, and cats in the area. There are bushes and trees 2-4 m tall on the margins of the marsh and a line of 10-15 m tall trees about 20 m south of the marsh. These trees and bushes are used as perches by the Red-winged Blackbirds.

There are no larger marshes within one km of this marsh, although small marshes with cattails are common in depressions in forests and fields. A pond 500 m away has a cattail border and Red-winged Blackbirds nest in this border and in nearby ditches. No nesting activity was noted in the adjacent upland grasses and fields.

Results

Field work was completed during the spring and summer of 1985. Nesting was allowed to proceed undisturbed until a casual survey of the marsh was made on 17 May. Nests with eggs were observed on that date. The first detailed survey was made on the morning of 22 May. A second survey was made on 29 May and subsequent surveys were made twice-weekly until mid-June, after which surveys were made at 7-10 day intervals through July.

Six nests were located during the first survey. Nest seven was discovered on 29 May (Fig. 1). All nests were built over water in cattails from the previous year. New cattails were below nest level on 22 May, though many exceeded nest level by 1 June. The nests were near the top of the old cattails and exposed clearly to the sky. The average depth of water below the seven nests was 20 cm (range 15-28 cm) and the distance from the water surface to the top of the nest averaged 41 cm (range 36-55 cm). There was no relationship between water depth and nest height.

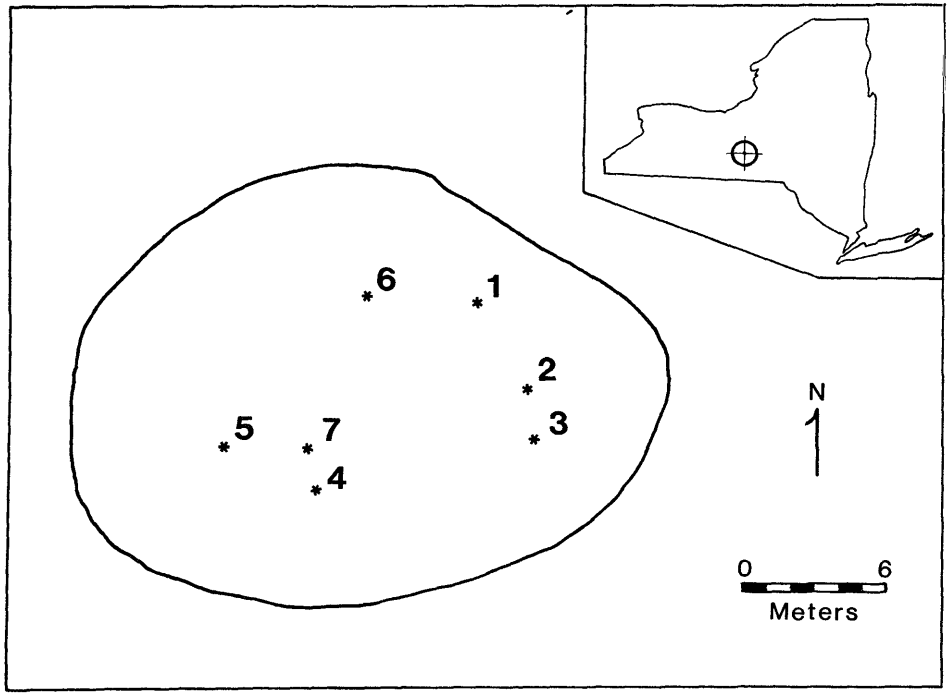

Fig. 1. Map of study site showing nest locations.

There were four eggs in each nest on 22 May, except that nest 2 contained four young birds. Nest 7, discovered a week later, had three nestlings on 29 May. The nestlings in nest 2 on 22 May are considered an early hatch, since Case and Hewitt (1963) reported that the earliest hatch they encountered in 926 nests over three years near our study site was during the last week of May. Four males were seen near the marsh but only two showed aggressive and territorial behavior, often chasing the other two males away.

On 29 May, nests 3 and 5 still contained eggs, whereas nestlings were present in other nests (Table 1). No mortality had occurred as all nests with four eggs on 22 May contained four eggs or nestlings on 29 May. New cattails were approaching nest height but old cattails dominated the scene in the marsh. Nest 2, with the most mature nestlings, was tipping at an angle of about 20° from horizontal, perhaps from the weight of the birds.

We expected some nests to be lost on our survey on 1 June due to the strong winds (30-50 km/hr) and a thunderstorm (10 mm of rain) on

the previous day. However, this weather brought no mortality to the nestling blackbirds. Eggs in nests 3 and 5 had hatched. Birds in nest 2, which hatched at least ten days before, were gone and presumed fledged. This nest had not tilted further and it is unlikely that the nestlings were spilled. No losses of nestlings occurred in nests 1, 6, or 7 but nest 4, with four nestlings on 29 May, had only three on 1 June. Many new cattails were above nest level on 1 June but were not affecting the stability of the nests in old cattails. Water level in the marsh had not changed from 22 May.

On 4 June all nestlings in nests 3, 4, and 5 were still present. Nests 1 and 7 were intact but empty and we presume that the birds fledged. The birds in nest 4 were about to fledge. Nest 6 was also empty except for one dead nestling. This bird was probably one or two days from leaving the nest when it died. No signs of aggression were visible. New cattails were well above the nest level by 4 June and the marsh was taking on a green color rather than the brown of old cattails.

Birds had fledged from nest 4 when observed at 16:00 on 7 June. Nests 3 and 5 still had four nestlings. A survey on 11 June showed all nests were empty but females were still displaying aggressive behavior toward the observers, probably due to fledglings in the marsh area.

Table 1. Summary of nest activity. "E" and "N" indicate the number of eggs and nestlings in the nest.

	Nest													
Date	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
	E	N	E	N	E	N	E	N	E	N	E	N	E	N
22 May	4			4	4		4		4		4		—	—
29 May		4		4	4			4	4			4		3
1 June		4		0		4		3		4		4		3
4 June		0				4		3		4		1 dead		0
7 June						4		0		4				
11 June						0				0				
Beginning of Incubation	12 May		9 May		19 May		14 May		19 May		12 May		11 May	
Hatch Date	23 May		20 May		30 May		25 May		30 May		23 May		22 May	
Fledging Date	3 Jun		31 May		10 Jun		5 Jun		10 Jun		3 Jun		2 Jun	

Total Eggs Layed in Seven Nests	33*	
Eggs Hatched	27	(82% of eggs)
Birds Fledged	25	(93% of nestlings)

*This assumes five eggs per nest for nests first observed eight or more days after incubation began.

Surveys were also made on 19 June, 29 June, 6 July, 16 July, and 25 July. New cattails were 50 cm above the old cattail level by 19 June. No renesting or aggressive behavior of Red-winged Blackbirds was observed on any of these visits to the marsh. Water depths had decreased substantially by 29 June with no water below nest 3 and an average of only 9 cm below the other six nests.

The approximate dates of incubation, hatching, and fledging are shown in Table 1, based on our observations and the assumption of an 11 day incubation and 11 days between hatching and fledging. Nero (1984) reported that the usual period of incubation, beginning after the third egg is laid, is eleven to twelve days. Case and Hewitt (1963) examined 926 nests over three years near our study site and found incubation periods were 10, 11, or 12 days after the last egg was layed and nestlings usually left the nest 10, 11, or 12 days after hatching.

The average number of eggs laid in active Red-winged Blackbird nests is between three and four (Neff and Meanley, 1957; Orians, 1961; Meanley and Webb, 1963; Case and Hewitt, 1963; Goddard and Board, 1967; Dolbeer, 1976; Crawford, 1977; Caccamise, 1977). We observed no more than four eggs in a nest. In calculating hatch success rates, however, we have assumed that five eggs were laid in nests that were first observed at least eight days after incubation began. This makes our reported hatch rates conservative since the actual number of eggs was likely to be 4 in these nests.

Birds that were in the nests one week after hatching were considered fledged if nestling mortality was not observed later. This is consistent with the method of Meanley and Webb (1963). In practice, most birds reported fledged were observed in the nest 8-10 days after hatching.

Discussion

The points of discussion in this study include 1) nest support, 2) nest density, 3) breeding success, and 4) renesting.

a) Nest Support

All nests observed in this study were in cattails from the previous season. This is in contrast to the findings of Bernstein and McLean (1980) in Ohio where nests built in late May and early June were in new cattails, or a combination of old and new, but no nests were entirely in old cattails. Holcomb and Twiest (1968) suggested that Red-winged Blackbirds breed earlier in marshes than in uplands near Toledo, Ohio, because cattails are available for nesting before upland vegetation reaches sufficient height and strength to support nests. Goddard and Board (1967) found that nests in old cattails were more successful than nests in other vegetation in Oklahoma and that old cattails were the only nest platforms available early in the season. However, early nests have often been reported to be more successful than later nests, perhaps

because older experienced females nest earlier than yearlings, and the results of Goddard and Board do not make it clear whether greater success in old cattails is due to the nest support or to other factors.

Joyner (1978) studied an upland nest site in Ontario and found that reed canary-grass from the previous year provided the nest support for all nests, though new vegetation provided cover to the nests. Joyner concluded that the consistent use of old reed canary-grass was due to its availability during the early portion of the nesting season. Robertson (1972) reported that old cattails were the most common material for marsh nest support in Connecticut, a combination of old and new cattails was nearly as common, and few nests were built entirely in new cattails. Brenner (1966) studied Red-winged Blackbirds in central Pennsylvania and found that old cattails were the primary nest support early in the season but were replaced by sedges in June.

The exclusive use of old cattails in this study is simply a matter of cattail phenology. Plants develop slower in cooler climates so while Red-winged Blackbirds nesting during May have new cattails available for nesting in more southerly latitudes, the new cattails are not tall and sturdy enough in New York and other northern sites during May. Some birds nest earlier in southern regions than in the north, but Meanley and Webb (1963) reported that the nesting season of the Red-winged Blackbird is virtually the same throughout its range in the eastern United States. Therefore, Red-winged Blackbirds nesting in May have only old cattails available in upstate New York but may use old or new cattails in milder climates.

Based on climate patterns, it is likely that old cattails are the general preference for support of marsh nests built in May in interior portions of New England, New York, and Pennsylvania, most of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and central and eastern portions of Canada.

b) Nest Density

The concentration of nests, seven in 370 m^2, is denser than reported in most studies of Red-winged Blackbirds. This concentration extrapolates to a density of 189 active nests per hectare of marsh vegetation. The spacings of only 1.8 m between nests 4 and 7 and 2.1 m between nests 2 and 3 are particularly interesting and indicate a great tolerance between the females on those nests.

Meanley and Webb (1963) reported 50 nests in a 0.61 ha (82/ha) tidal river habitat in Maryland. In a 6.4 ha upland habitat in Ohio, Dolbeer (1976) found 105 active nests in one year (16/ha) and 81 nests the next year (13/ha). Concentrations were dense around Oklahoma ponds examined by Goddard and Board (1967). At a 0.25 ha pond with only 0.012 ha of cattails, there were 9 nests to give a concentration of 741 nests per ha of cattails. Other nest concentrations reported by Goddard and Board were also over 100/ha in cattails surrounding ponds.

The nest concentrations reported in an Ohio marsh by Bernstein and McLean (1980) are more typical of others reported in the literature. They found that the density of active nests ranged from 0.4/ha to 1.4/ha in three marshes with areas of 5, 6, and 7 ha.

The high density of nests in this marsh is perplexing. Nesting habitat is not scarce in the immediate area and the marsh is near humans and domestic dogs and cats. The water is not unusually deep and most nests are within 6 m of dry land. The reason for the high density was not determined. It may have resulted from an abundant food supply or a cooperative effort by females to defend nests, as discussed below.

c) Breeding Success

Success rates for eggs and nestlings in this marsh are higher than reported elsewhere in the literature for Red-winged Blackbirds. Francis (1971) reviewed eight studies that reported success rates of 2712 active nests, mostly in marshes. Among those nests, 1136 (42%) were successful in fledging one bird. Among studies not reviewed by Francis, Caccamise (1977) studied 136 nests in New Jersey salt marshes and found 73% of eggs hatched, 62% of nestlings fledged, and 63% of nests were successful. Robertson (1972) reported a success rate of 53% among 738 marsh nests in Connecticut but only 34% among 162 upland nests. Weatherhead and Robertson (1977) reported 39% of 381 nests were successful in 10 marshes near Kingston, Ontario. Picman (1980) found only 23% of 399 nests in a British Columbia marsh were successful. Predation is generally reported as the major cause of losses in eggs and nestlings.

McGuire (1986) studied several dozen Red-winged Blackbird nests in central Alaska for two summers. He reported high hatch (90%) and fledging (93%) success rates and attributed this success to lack of predation, low interspecific competition, abundant food, and favorable weather during the nesting period. Nesting was more synchronous than reported in most studies.

Studies relating Red-winged Blackbird nest location to breeding success have concluded that success is greater with deeper water below the nest (Goddard and Board, 1967; Weatherhead and Robertson, 1977), lower nest placement (Goddard and Board, 1967; Weatherhead and Robertson, 1977), and higher nest placement (Meanley and Webb, 1963; Holcomb and Twiest, 1968). Francis (1971, 1973) subjected some of these conflicting conclusions to statistical analyses and found the reported differences in breeding success based on nest placement to be insignificant or masked by other factors. He concluded that nesting success is related to the mechanical sturdiness of vegetation and meteorological factors which may stress birds or destroy nests.

Crawford (1977) found that nests in which at least one nestling died

were closer together (x = 12.4 m) than nests without mortality (x = 19.7 m). Similarly, the density of nests was greater around nests with mortality (28/ha) than around nests without mortality (20/ha). Weatherhead and Robertson (1977) found that nest success was positively correlated with "area per female," defined as the area of the marsh divided by number of nests. They studied ten marshes with areas of 600 m^2 to 16,000 m^2. Nest success ranged from 20% where area per female was less than 150 m^2 to 58% with areas over 600 m^2 per female. (The area per female in this study is only 53 m^2.)

Picman (1981), on the other hand, found that a high nesting density contributes to greater success in Red-winged Blackbird nests. He makes a good argument that a dense, clumped nesting pattern gives the opportunity for a cooperative nest defense against the predatory Marsh Wren in British Columbia. This argument can be extended logically to include a cooperative nest defense against other predatory birds, such as crows and Blue Jays, and against mammals, such as dogs and raccoons.

Wittenberger and Hunt (1985, p. 27-30) have proposed that swamping, mobbing, and vigilance affect the adaptive significance of coloniality in birds such as Red-winged Blackbirds. Swamping requires a large number of nesting birds to "swamp" the ability of predators to prey on the birds. Some prey is taken but the number of survivors increases as colony population increases. The population of Red-winged Blackbirds in this marsh is too small to swamp a population of predators. We expect, however, that mobbing and vigilance have increased the success rates in this small marsh. Mobbing is used by Red-winged Blackbirds to deter predators. This tactic is more effective in a small marsh with a dense population because recruitment for mobbing is easier. A dense nesting pattern in a small marsh also improves vigilance and allows early detection of predators with less time spent on vigilance per individual.

The dates in Table 1 indicate a synchrony of nesting. Incubation began within an 11-day period in the seven nests. In contrast, others have reported that most females in a male's territory are asynchronous (Nero, 1956). Orians (1961) observed that nesting is synchronous in California as it begins in April but becomes asynchronous through May as nests fail, second nests are started, and new females arrive.

Robertson (1972) found synchronous nesting in a Connecticut marsh. He reported that synchrony was more likely in a marsh habitat than in uplands since old cattails provide an abundance of sturdy nest sites early in the season when upland sites have little sturdy vegetation. Robertson concluded that dense nesting and synchrony of nesting provides an effective defense against predators.

Synchronous nesting strengthens the cooperative nest defense which

is made possible by the dense nesting pattern. Red-winged Blackbirds with eggs or nestlings have a mutual interest in defending their nests. Synchronous nesting allows more efficient mobbing and vigilance against predators.

Finally, the weather may have significant impacts on nesting success through thermal stress on adults, eggs, or nestlings or by destruction of nests by wind or floods (Francis, 1971). The weather was favorable through the nesting period of 1 May - 11 June. Temperatures, measured 10 km west at Ithaca, averaged 13.9°C, 0.2°C above normal. Freezing weather occurred on several mornings but always with clear skies and light winds. Rain fell on 19 of 42 days giving a total of 72 mm, only 62% of the average. Moderate winds were noted on several days but no damage was caused to nests or the surrounding vegetation.

We propose that the high nest success rate observed in this marsh may be due to 1) sturdy, old cattails used as nest support, 2) a high density of nests which provides the opportunity for cooperative nest defense, 3) synchrony of nesting, and 4) favorable weather during the nesting period.

d) Renesting

Many studies on Red-winged Blackbirds report second and third nesting attempts through the summer. In most cases, the renesting is attributed to females with unsuccessful first nests (Dolbeer, 1976; Picman, 1981). No renesting was observed in this study. This is not surprising since all first nests were successful. An additional factor to inhibit second nests was the substantially lower water level in the marsh by late June which may have reduced the safety of the nests.

Conclusions

The results of this study have implications for the management of Red-winged Blackbird populations. Red-winged Blackbirds may be the most abundant native land bird in North America (Pettingill, 1970) and they are a nuisance in many areas. Bird damage to corn was surveyed in 24 states by Stone *et al.* (1972). New York was estimated to have damage to 41% of corn fields with a loss of 1.2 bu/acre, the highest of all states surveyed. Much of this damage is caused by Red-winged Blackbirds. Weatherhead *et al.* (1980) estimated blackbird damage to corn and grains in the St. Lawrence Valley runs into millions of dollars and Red-winged Blackbird populations are growing rapidly in that region.

A small marsh can produce a large number of fledgling Red-winged Blackbirds through dense nesting patterns and breeding synchrony if other conditions, such as vegetation and weather, are favorable. Most studies of marsh-nesting Red-winged Blackbirds focus on larger marshes where nest density and success are lower. An overall view of

the ecology of Red-winged Blackbirds must consider very small nesting habitats because 1) social structure and nest success may be different than seen in larger marshes and 2) there are many very small marshes formed from excavation associated with building of homes or highways or the drainage of agricultural land. Even a very small marsh can produce a dense concentration of nests and a high breeding success, given the right combination of weather, phenology, and setting.

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FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS
38th ANNUAL MEETING

The 38th Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. was held Friday, 11 October, through Sunday, 13 October 1985 in Buffalo. The Buffalo Ornithological Society was host.

The Council of Delegates meeting, chaired by Charles Smith, President, was convened at 2:30 p.m., 11 October. Sixteen member clubs answered the roll call. The minutes of the 37th Annual Meeting were accepted as distributed and published in *The Kingbird*, Vol. XXXV, No. 3.

The Membership Committee Report was distributed by Myrna Hemmerick, Chairman, accepted and filed.

The Treasurer's Report for the calendar year 1984 was distributed by William Vaughan, Treasurer, accepted and filed. There was no report from the Auditing Committee.

The Publications Committee reported that the Co-Editors of *The Kingbird*, Emanuel Levine and John Farrand, have resigned after many years of service and will be succeeded by Paul DeBenedictis. A Region 8 Editor is still being sought. Mr. Levine and Mr. Farrand were honored with resolutions and certificates of appreciation at the banquet on Saturday.

It was announced that *New York Birders* is now being published six times a year.

A motion to accept the membership application of The Institute for the Study of Nature, Ornithological Society, was passed unanimously.

The Nominating Committee, Morgan Jones, Chairman; Stephen Dempsey and William Lee, proposed the following slate for election: Harriet Marsi, President; Berna Weissman, Vice President; Stanley Lincoln, Treasurer; Constance Wilkins, Corresponding Secretary; Marilyn Schindler, Recording Secretary. The Council voted unanimous approval. Mr. Smith then turned the chair over to Harriet Marsi.

The John J. Elliott Award was presented to John M. C. Peterson for his article, "First Record of Palm Warbler Nesting in New York State," *The Kingbird*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1.

The Lillian C. Stoner Award was presented to Peter Hunt, nominated by the Cayuga Bird Club.

Paul DeBenedictis presented the report of the New York State Avian Records Committee, to be published in *The Kingbird*. He announced that new members of the committee are Barbara Spencer and Fritz Scheider. A new Chairman will be selected to replace Dr. DeBenedictis when he becomes Editor of *The Kingbird*.

The meeting was temporarily adjourned, to reconvene on Saturday morning.

Gordon Meade, Chairman of the Breeding Bird Atlas Committee, reported that field work for the project has been completed, with 99.6% of the Atlas blocks surveyed. Preparation for publication is proceeding under the Editorship of Robert Andrle.

The Waterfowl Count Report, printed in *The Kingbird*, was summarized by Walton Sabin, Chairman, who announced dates of 12 through 20 January for 1986.

President Marsi proposed that the 1985-1986 Nominating Committee consist of Charles Smith, Chairman, Richard Sloss and Pera Gorson and that the 1985-1986 Auditing Committee be Irving Cantor and Richard Sloss. The Council voted unanimous approval.

Lois Bautz, Endangered Species Unit, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, addressed the Delegates on issues of interest to the organization.

Neil Moon proposed that a Family Life Membership category be established. The matter was referred to the Executive Committee for consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.

Berna Weissman, Recording Secretary

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Out of the Eye of the Storm: Hurricane Gloria roared across Long Island the morning of September 27, 1985. Gloria's massive winds downed power lines and trees, smashed into homes and businesses, and created havoc along its path. As soon as it subsided and it seemed safe, Sy Schiff and I were on our way to Jones Beach to see if any exotic birds had been blown ashore. After previous hurricanes, Sandwich, Sooty, Black, and Bridled Terns had been seen at the West End of Jones Beach, and we had hopes of seeing some of these wind blown vagrants.

As we approached Meadowbrook Parkway, we had our first glimpse of something unusual. Dozens of Chimney Swifts were flying by in a westerly direction and in a constant stream. Proceeding down the parkway to the Jones Beach Causeway, we encountered a gigantic swirling mass of birds. More birds were concentrated in one area than we had ever seen before. They were all over the road, sitting in the grass and on the roadside, milling in the air, and descending into the nearby bushes. As far as the eye could see, there were birds in flight or sitting exhausted on the ground. Cape May Warblers in vivid colors reminiscent of Spring plumage were to be seen in the thousands. Two or three thousand Bobolink, moving down the strip in groups of ten to twenty, dove into any bush or unoccupied patch of grass they could find. The ground was also filled with Redstarts in every plumage. Many of the birds were so tired that we were able to pick them up and carry them to protected spots.

We joined Manny Levine at the Coast Guard Station Marina. He pointed out an Avocet and two Marbled Godwit, and Royal and Caspian Terns on a small island across from the Marina. Earlier, he had seen a Mourning Warbler, but we could not locate it. Moving on, we found two Worm-eating Warblers and a Connecticut Warbler in a small group of pines.

Birds were constantly streaming by and we could not keep up with all of them. We found three Cattle Egrets and five Snowy Egrets huddled in nearby pines. Merlin and Sharp-shinned Hawks darted through the air and had easy pickings on the tired birds scattered before them. Black-throated Blue Warblers were scattered throughout as were Northern Waterthrush. Pectoral Sandpipers flew by in small flocks. They rested briefly and then moved on as more of their kind came in to take their place. The air was completely filled with birds fluttering around, looking for a shelter to recover from their ordeal. Many of the birds that settled on the road were run over by cars as they were too exhausted to move out of harm's way.

As the light started to fade, we moved more rapidly from place to place, finding new species with each move. As darkness came, we made our way home. We had all seen a spectacle none of us had ever seen or envisioned before: thousands upon thousands of birds in an area not more than a half mile in length. We could only hope that most of these birds would find their way safely back to wherever they had been before Gloria scooped them up and deposited them on our small patch of beach. We never did see the exotic terns we had come to see, but we had an experience in those few hours we would surely never forget or possibly ever see again.

Alvin Wollin, 4 Meadow Lane, Rockville Centre, New York 11570.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Chronology of an Early Hooded Merganser Nesting: Our farm pond on Ten Mile Road, Town of Carrollton, Cattaraugus County, had about 200 square feet of open water on 26 March 1986. A pair of Hooded Mergansers flew in and fished for minnows along the edge of the ice. The next day all the ice had melted. We saw the mergansers daily after that. A standard Wood Duck box was located about 150 ft. from the house and mounted on an 8 ft. two inch iron pipe in shallow water. We occasionally saw the female enter the box for short periods and then join the male in fishing on the pond. Then both flew to some unknown destination.

On 7 April we saw the male alone on the pond for about 30 minutes and then he left without the female. This was the last we saw of him but the female was seen fishing on the pond later in the day. We assumed this to be the start of incubation. Thereafter, the female usually emerged from the box early in the morning, fished vigorously for about 15 minutes, making a dive about every half minute. Usually she surfaced with an approximately inch and a half long Fathead Minnow (*Pimepheles promelas*). Once she had a crayfish. When she finished feeding she went to a large rock to preen for about five minutes before flying directly to the opening in the duck box. Only once did she slip and have to drop back to the pond for a second try.

On 5 May we noticed that the female no longer fished in the pond but flew down to the middle of the pond from the box, swam to the near end of the pond and flew off. Palmer (*Handbook of North American Birds*, Vol. 3: 458; 1975. Yale Univ. Press, New Haven) gives the incubation period as usually 33 days, so we watched the nest box carefully on 10 May. The female emerged from the box, flew off for a short time, but we didn't see her return. About 09:30 hours we thought we could see movement in the box; at 09:45 the female was at the entrance with half her body out of the opening; at 10:00 she flew down to the middle of the pond and then swam back toward the box. We were at a closed window at the upper level of our house so we couldn't hear if she was calling but at 10:05 the first young appeared for a second or two at the opening, jumped the eight feet to the pond surface, and swam to the mother. Ducklings continued to come out at about one minute intervals. Some intervals were longer than others, for once three jumped out one after the other. At 10:16 all nine young were out of the box and appeared to be lively and in good shape. Some dived for a second or two, some preened and when the female swam away from the group they followed closely in line. Usually one of the young jumped on the female's back for 5 to 10 seconds and then slid back into the pond. Three or four times the female dived for two or three seconds, coming right back up, as though demonstrating the Hooded Merganser dive.

The female led them along the edge of the pond where they appeared to chase surface insects and moved across to the far side where they loafed along the shore for about 10 minutes. She then led them to a small inlet spring run which took them from view. This was the last we saw of them, at 11:12. In the evening we checked the box for unhatched eggs or tardy young. Only four small egg fragments remained.

Gretch and Gretch (*Kingbird* 35: 254-255) rightly predicted that in the state south of Clinton County Hooded Mergansers would start egg laying earlier than 16 April. This Cattaraugus County Hooded Merganser probably laid her first egg on 30 March if we assume her to lay one egg per day and to start incubation after the last egg was laid 7 April. Johnsgard and Kear, in a review of parental carrying of waterfowl, (*Living Bird* 7: 89-102; 1968) cited accounts from Bent (*Life Histories of North American Waterfowl*, 1923) of female Hooded Mergansers carrying young in the bill but not carrying young on the back while swimming. We were not able to determine whether the female ate the egg shells or carried them away but they were missing the evening of nest leaving.

Stephen W. and Ellen E. Eaton, Ten Mile Rd., Allegany, New York 14706

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

A Wilson's Storm-Petrel Sighting from Rockland Co., New York: At 6:00 p.m. on the afternoon of August 18, 1986, as Tropical Storm (nee Hurricane) Charlie passed off Long Island, I sighted a Wilson's Storm-Petrel in the Tappan Zee north of Piermont Pier. The air was clear, with excellent visibility as the humidity had dropped during the afternoon to 55%. The sky was equally blue and clouded with dramatic bands of cumulus leftovers from the storm. The wind was steady from the northeast at about 25 mph, raising a goodly chop but no waves or swell. The sun was shining brightly on the portion of the river where I observed the bird.

I was returning from the end of the Pier and had come west about one-third of a mile (*ergo*, I was about two-thirds of a mile out on the Pier). I had been scanning gulls, cormorants, and swallows, using both my B&L 7x35 binoculars and my gun-stock (Bushhawk mount) mounted BalScope telescope at about 30x. What appeared at first glance to be a large, dark, slow-moving swallow proved to be a storm-petrel: all black with long, pointed wings, bright-white rump patch, **rounded** tail, and even a glimpse of yellow webbing in the feet that trailed through the water from time to time.

The bird was 75 to 100 feet north of the Pier in excellent light when first sighted; the sun was at a low angle, which is probably why I could see that bit of yellow in the webbing. It flew with the typical "butterfly-like" hovering, contentedly picking at bits of flotsam or plankton (or whatever is floating on the Hudson). It was moving slowly eastward (to the right as I faced north) at first, reversed direction, then gradually and erratically flew north, still feeding, until out of sight near the Tappan Zee Bridge. The total viewing time was 10 minutes. I am familiar with the species after 30 or 40 summer pelagic trips into the Atlantic.

Peter Derven, 70 Third Ave., Nyack, New York 10960

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

A Large Whimbrel Flock at Derby Hill, New York: While watching waterbirds passing Derby Hill on 27 Aug 1986, at 17:12 EDT I noticed a long loose line of large shorebirds approaching from the northwest. An approximate count of the flock was 212 birds. A cold front passage had occurred earlier in the day. The sky was 50-70% cumulus clouds and mixed sun, the temperature 60°F, winds NW 20-25 mph. When initially noted, these birds were about ½ mile away and coming directly toward me. They were approximately 15 feet above the water. As they approached very rapidly, flying in a long loose wavy line, I noted the long decurved beak of a curlew. They continued to approach to within 100-200 yards and passed directly overhead. The heavily streaked crown and face pattern and buffy breast streaking became clearly visible. The distinctive *di di di du* call was heard on at least three occasions from birds in the flock. These birds were clearly recognizable as Whimbrels as they passed directly overhead at an altitude of 75-100 feet and moved rapidly southeast out of sight. Total viewing time was 1.5 to 2 minutes, initially through a 30X gunstock mounted spotting scope and later with 10X Bushnell Custom binoculars. This is the highest count ever reported from upstate New York, but groups of about 100 birds previously have been reported from western Lake Ontario in New York and Ontario, Canada.

Gerald A. Smith, Derby Hill Bird Observatory, RR1, Box 498, Mexico, NY 13114

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON

ROBERT SPAHN

This season's highlights represent only upstate New York, as reports from one-third of the Regions (Regions 8-10) encompassing the southeastern quarter of the state were not written. Over the portion of the state reporting, the weather generally was cold and wet throughout. Both record low temperatures and record rainfall were reported at various locales, along with heavy, damaging storms and flooding. In Region 1 there were only 86 days between frosts on 3-4 June and 28-29 August. Rain soaked 11 of the summer weekends in the Adirondacks. In Region 2 the normal summer lawn burnout failed to occur, saving on water expense but possibly cutting into birding time with extra mowing required. All of this rain and cold apparently had little effect on passerine breeding success according to those commenting. However, this weather and the lack of an Atlas driving force resulted in many fewer observers reporting than we have enjoyed in the recent past.

As usual, this season's reports include the tail end of spring migration, the height of the breeding season, and the start of fall migration. There was a typical trickle of late migrant flycatchers, thrushes and warblers into early to mid-June. A selection from the most interesting late spring records includes: very late Olive-sided Flycatchers in Regions 1 and 4; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in Region 5; Common Loons late or summering in nearly every Region at locations removed from their normal breeding lakes; a very late Red-throated Loon in Region 6; the state's fifth record for Mississippi Kite in Region 2; Glaucous Gull present in Regions 1 and 2 through late June to early July; Iceland Gull to early July in Region 2; and Evening Grosbeaks still migrating on 3 and 4 June in Regions 1 and 2, respectively.

This breeding season is very difficult to evaluate. With the Atlas field work over, numbers of reports were way off in most Regions. The Region 4 report gives much numerical data but, for now, no way to assess it, as there is no basis for comparison in terms of numbers of observers reporting in detail, time spent, how the counts were made, or relationship to history. This same problem applies to much data from the other Regions. However, these numbers are a start for the future. There are several current and proposed projects which will help this situation with time: the Breeding Bird Surveys and Censuses; future Atlas work; Project BirdWatch, a chance for anyone to contribute data on a weekly basis (contact Charles Smith at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology); and proposed systematic studies of selected species, one of which is the DEC's effort to study the Loggerhead Shrike (contact Paul Novak 518-439-7635 with any sightings).

Among the most interesting stories of the breeding season are: the increase of Double-crested Cormorant inland, with 1400 nests on Little Galloo Island in eastern Lake Ontario, a peak of 600 birds on the Four Brothers Islands in Lake Champlain, and up to 100 birds all summer at Montezuma NWR; a first confirmed breeding record for American Wigeon in Region 2; Bald Eagles again fledging young in Regions 1 and 6 and "prospecting" elsewhere; successful Osprey hacking in Region 1; the spread of Turkey Vulture northward in Regions 4, 6 and 7; Wild Turkey increasing in all Regions; Yellow-throated Warblers again in Region 1 near where they first nested two years ago; another Palm Warbler pair in Region 7; the farthest south and west confirmed breeding of Bay-breasted Warbler in Region 5; only three Loggerhead Shrike nests located, in spite of intense effort spent; and a good cone crop holding Red Crossbills in Region 7 for possible breeding. Some special data gathering efforts reported include: the summaries of breeding bird surveys in Regions 1 and 5, nest finding work reported in Region 1, supplementary Atlas work from Region 5, and spruce habitat coverage in Region 4.

The start of the fall migration was very slow, with waterfowl scarce, shorebird habitat poor nearly everywhere and most species in low numbers, and landbird migration very poor through the end of August. Bright spots in this gloomy start to the fall migration were: an inland record high count of 212 Whimbrel in Region 5, 75 unidentified white egrets at one location in Region 7, 1500+ Bobolinks in Region 3, 15,000+ Bank Swallows in Region 2, record early dates for Red Phalarope in Region 2, and for Palm Warbler and Rusty Blackbird in Region 4, and Evening Grosbeak migrants in early August in Region 6. A good August hawk count was tallied at Braddock Bay, with 910 birds, all immatures, on the peak day.

If the reports are organized and data sifted by species, there were a large number of negatives, indicating many species which the Regional editors think should be watched carefully in the future. This list includes: American Bittern, Green-backed Heron, American Black Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Sora, Ring-necked Pheasant, Spotted Sandpiper, Black Tern, both cuckoos, Whip-poor-will, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Purple Martin, Bank Swallow, Wood Thrush, Loggerhead Shrike, Scarlet Tanager, and the grassland sparrows, especialy Henslow's. These species deserve special attention to determine whether the suggested trends are cyclic, long-range or just a function of special variables of this season.

The positives for the season include: Great Blue Heron colony increases and Least Bittern doing well in Region 2, successful Peregrine

Falcon breeding in Region 7, both cuckoos locally common in Region 1, and more breeding Sedge Wren in Regions 1, 2 and 5 than usual. Additional tidbits to tempt you to read in detail include: a Black-billed Cuckoo egg in a Field Sparrow nest in Region 1, young Tufted Titmice at a hummingbird feeder in Region 6, evidence of date/site fidelity in a Veery from a Region 7 banding return, and the Region 7 summary of efforts to establish a Boreal Heritage Preserve in the Adirondacks.

There were few rarities this summer. The best of those not already noted are: Region 2–Snowy Egret, Thayer's Gull, and Clay-colored Sparrow; Region 3–Whimbrel and Western Kingbird; Region 4–Snowy Egret and Acadian Flycatcher; and Region 7–Lesser Black-backed Gull and Sandhill Crane. As this is the breeding season, the B.O.T.S. Award must go to the new breeding species for New York, Caspian Tern, with 112 nests found on Little Galloo Island in Region 6. For perspective, however, note that Caspian Tern nested only 5 miles across the border in Ontario as far back as 1968 (Bull, *Birds of New York State*).

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Standard abbreviations: county names are shortened to their first four letters; months are shortened to their first three letters; ad—adult; Alt—Alternate plumage; arr—arrival or first of season; BBS—Breeding Bird Survey; CO—confirmed; f—female, FL—fledgling; FY—adult feeding young; I—Island; im—immature; j—juvenile; L—Lake, m—male; max—maximum; mob—multiple observers; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; NYSARC—report to New York State Avian Records Committee; P—Park; Pd—Pond; ph—photographed; Pt—Point; Res—Reservoir; SP—State Park; spm—specimen; subad—subadult; T—Town of; Twn—township; WMA—Wildlife Management Area; y—young.

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

STEPHEN W. EATON

The *Buffalo News* reported that June was long on changeable weather and short on consistency, continuing a trend from April and May. It had short dry spells and a few strong thunderstorms. The average June temperature was 64.1° at Buffalo, about two degrees cooler than normal, and 58° at Jamestown. Frost killed tender plant growth (Bracken and Sensitive Fern) in the Southern Tier frost pockets on the night of 2-3 June. A record low of 38° was recorded at the Buffalo weather station. Flash floods occurred at Arcade and other areas in the region on 11 June and tornado watches were posted on 1 and 16 June. Rain in Allegany County was reported to be 6.92 inches.

The unsettled weather continued through much of July. Showers occurred somewhere in western New York on most days. At Buffalo only 53% of possible sunshine was logged, which made this the cloudiest July in 10 years. Temperatures averaged only slightly above normal at 71.1°. At Buffalo precipitation was near normal for the month at 2.82 inches, but in many parts of the Southern Tier counties flooding occurred; at Amity Lake 3.5 inches fell, soaking the water table. Thunderstorms were reported on 7, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19 and 20 July. Winds during the month were light and Lake Erie warmed to 73°.

In contrast to July, August was sunny, cool and pleasant with an average temperature of one degree below normal. There was scattered frost the night of 28-29 August across the Southern Tier frost pockets giving these areas only 87 days of tomato and squash gardening. At the same time, Buffalo basked at 42° next to its large radiator, Lake Erie, which had cooled to 67°.

The four-year old Bald Eagles at Iroquois NWR successfully fledged two young sometime in mid-August. Both young were banded by the Endangered Species Unit of DEC with a Fish and Wildlife band on one tarsus and a gold-colored band on the other tarsus, with a blue tab extending back from the rivet-type band. The young were still in the area about the Mohawk Pool at Iroquois up to the end of the period. The next to last year of hacking Ospreys at the Allegheny Reservoir on the Seneca Indian Nation lands in Cattaraugus County was successful. Six young were taken from nests on Long Island, brought to the hacking boxes along the reservoir and fed fish until able to fly. Five birds were successfully hacked but one broke a wing before being hacked, probably due to harassment by a raccoon which somehow ascended the tower during high water; the bird later died. This makes 30 birds successfully hacked at that site in six years by Mary and John Forness under the direction of DEC. They plan to conclude the hacking of Ospreys at Allegheny in 1987 when 36 birds hopefully will have been released.

Walter Klabunde has summarized the 18 United States Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Surveys run in Region 1 for 20 years and has calculated the totals for the routes and how they compare with the previous 19 years. Of the 121 species counted, 51 were reported in higher than average numbers, 46 species were in

average figures and 24 species were in lower than average numbers. These last were Green-backed Heron, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Spotted Sandpiper, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Veery, Wood Thrush, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Red-eyed Vireo, Rufous-sided Towhee, Field Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Northern Oriole and House Sparrow. Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles and House Sparrows were at all-time lows. Two species were new to the 20 years of counts, Common Merganser and Osprey, and Acadian Flycatcher was reported for the second time in twenty years.

No one can come close to the nest finding ability of Region 1's Vivian Pitzrick unless it be Elizabeth "Betsy" Brooks, who now spends most of her time in Rochester. Vivian found 556 nests of 51 species up to the end of August and is still looking. To summarize her activities briefly, she located nests of 8 hawks, 4 Black-billed Cuckoos, 5 Alder Flycatchers, 29 Eastern Phoebes, 8 Eastern Kingbirds, 56 Tree Swallows, 29 Barn Swallows, 6 Black-capped Chickadees, 1 Tufted Titmouse, 52 American Robins, 17 Cedar Waxwings, 49 Eastern Bluebirds, 38 Chipping Sparrows, 20 Field Sparrows, 30 Song Sparrows, 15 House Finches, 63 American Goldfinches and many others. One interesting record was a Field Sparrow's nest containing a Black-billed Cuckoo egg, probably an unintentional mistake. It's lucky for the birds she is not an oologist of the old school.

The only Breeding Bird Censuses taken in Region 1 are done by Elizabeth Brooks near Alfred, Allegany County. She has documented consistent decline over 13 years in Golden-crowned Kinglet, Black-throated Green Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Canada Warbler and Veery in an upland mixed pine-spruce hardwoods plantation. Some of these declines probably are due to vegetational change, but some, such as Golden-crowned Kinglet, can go back to the harsh winter of 1976-77 (Robbins *et al.* 1986). She reports that two colonies each of Henslow's and of Grasshopper Sparrow were gone from Allegany County, that Prairie Warblers were missing from five locations and that White-throated Sparrows were missing from two locations.

The hoped-for crash of Gypsy Moths occurred in much of southern Cattaraugus County. Very few egg cases have been seen, leading forecasters to predict a small next generation. Vivian Pitzrick noted Black-billed Cuckoo, Downy Woodpecker, Gray Catbird, American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, European Starling, Common Grackle, Northern Oriole eating Gypsy Moth larvae; to these Tim Baird could add Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The larvae ate enough leaves of various tree species in southern Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties to reduce fruit production to near zero. North of the infestation in those counties and in much of Chautauqua County fruit production by trees and shrubs was abundant. The only tree producing abundant seed in the Gypsy Moth areas was White Ash, apparently spurned by the moth larvae.

The very wet period concentrated shorebird migrants in some areas but generally urged them further south rather than treating us to a show in western

New York. The first pronounced wave of warblers along the Lake Erie plain was noted by Robert Sundell on 14 Aug; at least 15 species were found, including two rarely observed during the fall: an adult male Cerulean Warbler and a Yellow-breasted Chat.

Many active observers in Chautauqua County are adding to our knowledge of nesting and migration. Robert Sundell is particularly active along with Terry Mosher and Dave Gagne. We thank them for their energies. We are sorry to lose Dave Dister, who has moved from the area. Many observations in this report come from the Buffalo Ornithological Society's noteworthy records furnished me at an early date by Fran Rew and Bob Andrle, who have carefully screened those records – many thanks.

Abbreviations: ASP–Allegany State Park; BBS–U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey; BOS–Buffalo Ornithological Society; INWR–Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge; NP–Nature Preserve; WP–Wildlife Preserve.

Contributors: Robert Andrle, Tim Baird, Wavel & Maxine Barber, Bellerby, Elizabeth Brooks, Buffalo Ornithological Society, William & Olive Burch, Lou & Doris Burton, Don & Jane Clark, William D'Anna, Steve Eaton, Don Endres, Dave Gagne, Wayne Gall, Paul Hess, Walter Klabunde, Terry & Judy Mosher, Vivian Pitzrick, Betsy Potter, Fran Rew, Art Schaffner, Roberson, Olga Rosche, Robert Sundell (RtS), Roger Sundell (RgS), Joe Thill, William Vaughan, Watson.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: one Red House L, ASP, 16 Jul; two Chau L 20 Jul; unusual in summer away from Great Lakes. Double-crested Cormorant: arr Barcelona 22 Aug, earliest Chau record. Am. Bittern: one Tonawanda WMA 8 Jun, only report. Least Bittern: three areas–Tonawanda WMA, INWR and Tifft Farm NP – entire period. Great Egret: max six INWR Jun and eight Bergeson NS 6 Aug. Little Blue Heron: im Tifft Farm NP 18-27 Jul (WG, mob). Brant: 35 Jamestown 2 Jun (RS), uncommon in spring. Canada Goose: locals continue population increase; 40-70 Farmersville entire period. Wood Duck: one ad five y Fredonia 11 Jul. Am. Wigeon: one ad, 11 y Tifft Farm NP 26 Jun; one ad, 12 y Times Beach, Buffalo, 17 Jul. Gadwall: max ten INWR 8 Jun. Hooded Merganser: one ad, six y INWR 8 Jun. Com. Merganser: max 25 Allegheny R, entire period, nesting still not confirmed Catt but strongly suspected.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: one Ward Twn, Alle, 18 Jun (EB); one INWR 6 Jul (DE); four singles western NY 9-31 Aug, probably migrants. Bald Eagle: one Chau L 21 Aug; one ad, 2 subad Allegheny Res entire period. N. Harrier: one Ward Twn, 21 Jul, possible breeder; arr Wales, Erie, 10 Aug; and Barcelona 14 Aug. Cooper's Hawk: three y successfully fledged Belmont, Alle, 15 Jul (VP); one carrying prey Falconer 3 Jun (RS). N. Goshawk: active nest Hanging Bog WMA, Alle, during period, only report. Red-shouldered Hawk: two y Belmont 7 Jun, nest apparently successful (VP); one successful nest Vandalia, Catt (SE). Broad-winged Hawk: three nests, one active through June, Scio (VP). Wild Turkey: many large flocks reported through period, Southern Tier. Com. Moorhen: one New Harmony, Chau, 4 Jul, only report away from Lake plain. NO RAILS reported. Semipalmated Plover: arr Tonawanda WMA 6 Jul. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Goat I 19 Jul. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr INWR 29 Jun. Solitary Sandpiper: arr Tonawanda WMA 6 Jul. Upland Sandpiper: 2 ad, 3 j Randolph, 2 ad, 2 y Chautauqua Twn 6 Jul. Whimbrel: arr Somerset 3 Aug. Ruddy Turnstone: arr Goat Island 7 Aug. Sanderling: arr six Carlton 10 Aug, first for year BOS. Least Sandpiper: arr Tonawanda WMA 29 Jun. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr three Fredonia 29 Jul. Dunlin: arr LaSalle P, Buffalo, 31 Aug. Stilt Sandpiper: arr two Tonawanda WMA 20 Jul, first for year BOS. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr three INWR 12 Jul. Red-necked Phalarope: arr two INWR 25 Aug (DE). Little Gull:

arr LaSalle P, Buffalo, 27 Aug. Bonaparte's Gull: arr 120 ad Niagara Falls 30 Jul; one ad Barcelona 31 Jul. Glaucous Gull: one "Alt I plumage" Barcelona **29 June** (RtS, RgS), first summer record Chau. Caspian Tern: arr five INWR 20 Jul. Forster's Tern: arr Dunkirk H 23 Aug, first report for year BOS. Black Tern: one each INWR and Tonawanda WMA 28 Jun; arr 12 Niagara Falls 23 Aug; max 41 LaSalle P, Buffalo, 31 Aug.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Both cuckoos nesting commonly southern Catt and Alle Counties.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: singles singing 21 and 27 Jun on BBS, probably late migrants or non-breeders; arr Goat I 6 Aug. E. Wood-Pewee: arr Jamestown 16 Jul. N. Raven: one central rectrix found head of Red House Brook, ASP, 5 Jul (SE, WV). Tufted Titmouse: two ad, eight y Amity L 6 Jun (VP). Carolina Wren: one FY Lakewood, Chau 4 Jul; one Barcelona 31 Jul; one Eden 16 Aug. Winter Wren: one Rushing Stream WS 22 Jun. Sedge Wren: two Hartland, Niag, 14 Jun; one Pomfret Twn, Chau, 26 Jun, where two singing males in same hayfield in May. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 14 singing males Alle June (EB). Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: one j Cold Spring, Catt, 30 Jun. Swainson's Thrush: arr two Tonawanda Twn, Erie, 9 Aug.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: arr INWR 30 Aug. Tennessee Warbler: arr Pomfret 29 Aug. Nashville Warbler: four Alfred Twn, Alle, 30 Jun; pair Arkwright 29 Jun; arr Buckhorn I, SP 23 Aug. N. Parula: arr two Goat I 30 Aug. Chestnut-sided Warbler: arr Tifft Farm NP 28 Aug. Magnolia Warbler: arr Buckhorn I, SP 23 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr Lake Erie SP 20 Aug. Black-throated Green Warbler: arr Tifft Farm NP 28 Aug. Blackburnian Warbler: arr INWR 10 Aug. **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** one of two singing males seen in May Science L, ASP, still present 30 Jun (TM) and 5 Jul, last (WD, BP). Prairie Warbler: three Alle Jul; six ad males, two ad females, three j East Oak Hill Rd, Carrollton, 14-26 Jun (RS). Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Pomfret Twn 19 Aug. Blackpoll Warbler: arr Tifft Farm NP 28 Aug. Cerulean Warbler: arr Barcelona 14 Aug. Black-and-white Warbler: arr Pomfret Twn 19 Aug. Ovenbird: arr Tifft Farm NP 28 Aug. Mourning Warbler: arr Buckhorn I, SP 23 Aug. Wilson's Warbler: arr Tifft Farm NP 28 Aug. Canada Warbler: arr Tonawanda Twn, Erie, and Tifft Farm NP 28 Aug. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Amity Twn, Alle, 2 Jun-6 Jul.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Vesper Sparrow: five in three twns, Alle June, only reports. Grasshopper Sparrow: three Alle in July; two Pomfret Twn July. Henslow's Sparrow: two INWR 6 Jul; one Chau Twn 15 Jul; two Alfred 24 Jul; one Alexander Twn, Gene, 31 Jul. White-throated Sparrow: one Ward Twn, Alle, 1 Jul; one Alfred Twn, Alle, 9 Jul; one Allenberg Bog 19 Jul; one France Brook, ASP, 29 Jun, 4 Jul (TB). Orchard Oriole: two ads attending nest South Valley, Catt 19 and 26 Jun, where nested 1985 (RS). Evening Grosbeak: last Grand I, Niag, 3 Jun.

Ten Mile Road, Allegany, NY 14706

REGION 2 – GENESEE

KEVIN C. GRIFFITH

This season did not have typical summer weather. As an indication of its ample rainfall, I didn't have to water my lawn once! The monthly totals were all above average. June's total was 4.27 inches, a relatively high 1.49 inches above normal. July followed with a total of 3.13 inches, 0.65 inches above normal. August precipitation was only 0.09 inches higher than normal at 3.29 inches. Average temperatures also deviated consistently from the norm, but in this case it was on the down side. June's average was 3.4 degrees below normal at 63.3°, July was down 1.5 degrees at 69.8°, and August's average of 65.7° was a whopping 3.8 degrees below normal.

This reporting period covers the late spring migration, summer residents and early fall migrants. Observations correspondingly pretty much run the gamut. The roller coaster summer season seemed to have no major adverse effect on the nesting season. The above normal rains helped produce some high water in the lakeshore ponds, but most nesting species seemed to be holding their own. Once again shorebird habitat was at a premium. High lake levels eliminated critical shoreline habitat. American Bittern proved to be scarce, while Least Bittern totals were high and they were found in new localities. Green-backed Heron seemed to experience a mild decline from recent years. Black-crowned Night-Heron appeared to be on a mild upswing with good numbers reported. Waterfowl numbers were mixed. Nesting Wood Ducks were in good supply. Am. Black Duck were scarce and Blue-winged Teal were either down considerably or doing a good job of hiding. A female **AMERICAN WIGEON** with a brood along Sawyer Road in Carlton was a first confirmed breeding record for the Region. Single Ring-necked Ducks popped up in a few locations. Upland Sandpipers had a relatively successful nesting season. Populations were located along the west lakeshore and at the Monroe County Airport. The high waters may have been detrimental to a few pairs of Spotted Sandpipers. Sora may have been affected by high water levels, as records of this species from along Lake Ontario were sparse. There was some speculation that it was down in numbers, but hard data don't exist. Sora habitat should be watched more carefully in the future. At first it appeared that Black Tern also was influenced, but reporters observed that they simply may have moved a bit inland from the shore.

Accipiters were noted with great regularity. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were reported throughout the season, which is not usually the case along the lakeshore. A probable nesting Northern Goshawk was observed on 23 July in Bristol; this species has been recorded as a regular summer nester in the southern hills of the Region. A Northern Saw-whet Owl was found dead along Northrup Creek in July. While nesting of this species away from Bergen Swamp still has not been confirmed, it has been suspected. Once again Whip-poor-will reports were few and far between.

Ring-necked Pheasant was not reported in great numbers. As a game bird, it has declined drastically. Since its decline in the 1970's it has become a difficult

species to monitor. Some individuals have concentrated their activity at marsh edges, away from traditional hedgerow habitats. We should continue to check its populations in the Region.

The passerine nesting season had its ups and downs. On the plus side, at least two pairs of Sedge Wrens were reported in the Region. This species has gone unreported as a nesting bird in recent years. Northern Orioles appeared to have a highly successful season, and the nesting Orchard Orioles returned to Point Breeze for another breeding season. A report of Red Crossbills in Durand Eastman Park, Rochester, once again suggests the possibility that the species has nested here in recent years. Negatives were fairly prevalent this year. Some of this downturn may reflect the completion of Atlas field work, which led to less coverage of nesting species within the Region. Woodland species like Eastern Wood-Pewee and Wood Thrush were present but their numbers seemed low. Brown Thrasher, while not drastically reduced, also were in shorter supply than usual. Fewer Cerulean Warbler and Ovenbird were reported than in recent years. Other species to watch are Vesper and Henslow's Sparrow.

The late spring migration was highlighted by a singing Clay-colored Sparrow discovered by Betsy Brooks at Manitou on 4 June. Another, or possibly the same bird as these sites are close to each other, was heard singing in Greece on 10 June by Frank Nicoletti. (Chipping Sparrows also may sing like this species–*Ed.*)

Glaucous Gulls now seem to be reported more regularly in June and July, as they were this season. This summer an Iceland Gull also was reported from June through 6 July at Charlotte. Terns had an off season. Most notable was the lack of Forster's Tern.

Late August saw the passage of some major cold fronts. These fronts traditionally have brought good waterbird flights along the lake. For the most part, such flights never materialized this year. Migratory waterfowl appear pretty much on schedule, with Northern Shoveler the only obvious miss. "Fly-by" shorebirds were frequent along the lakeshore, for there was no place for them to land. Among shorebirds, records of Willet, Baird's Sandpiper and all three phalaropes were noteworthy. A minor puzzler was the general lack of Short-billed Dowitchers. Conditions for a late summer jaeger flight seemed favorable, but one never materialized.

The passerine migration which often accompanies these fronts also was poor. On a positive note, strong southwest to west winds emulated spring conditions and produced some reverse hawk flights of significant proportions. Riding the warm thermals of August was an immature Bald Eagle, and all three accipiters were observed in these flights. There were some early arrivals and interesting totals in the early fall migration. Swainson's Thrush, which appeared to be down this spring, were present in good numbers in late August. A Gray-cheeked Thrush at Manitou on 20 Aug was quite early, as was an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Braddock Bay on 15 Aug. This, coupled with the Evening Grosbeak at Braddock Bay on 5 Aug, gave us a hint of the upcoming fall migration.

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Abbreviations: BB–Braddock's Bay; HB–Hamlin Beach; IB–Irondequoit Bay; LSP–Letchworth State Park; WL–West Lakeshore.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: record early arr HB 10 Aug (WS). Horned Grebe: arr Carlton 24 Aug. Double-crested Cormorant: max 59 HB 25 Aug. Least Bittern: max nine Greece 9 Aug. Cattle Egret: two Greece 24 Jun, continue good showing from spring. Ring-necked Duck: one Perinton 7 Jun-31 Jul. Oldsquaw: arr Manitou 27 Aug. White-winged Scoter: arr HB 19 Aug. Red-breasted Merganser: last Webster 18 Jun.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: max 32 Wheatland 19 Aug. **MISSISSIPPI KITE:** subad BB 1 Jun (FN, NYSARC). Merlin: one Livonia 30 Jul and 8 Aug; one HB 15 Aug. Black-bellied Plover: arr WL 25 Jul. Lesser Golden-Plover: arr Perinton 25 Aug. Semipalmated Plover: arr six HB 1 Jul. Greater Yellowlegs: arr HB 16 Jul. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Perinton 6 Jul. Willet: one IB 23 Aug (DT). Upland Sandpiper: max 17 Monroe Co. Airport 12 Jul. Ruddy Turnstone: arr HB 30 Jul. Red Knot: arr Charlotte 30 Jul. Sanderling: arr 40 IB 26 Jul. Least Sandpiper: one Manitou 20 Jun, late spring or early arr? Baird's Sandpiper: three WL 15 Aug (RH). Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Perinton 13 Jul. Stilt Sandpiper: arr Perinton 8 Jul. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr Perinton 8 Jul. Wilson's Phalarope: two HB 12 Aug. Red-necked Phalarope: up to five HB 25-29 Aug. **RED PHALAROPE:** one HB 28 Aug (HD, WS), early. Parasitic Jaeger: one Charlotte 19 Aug, one BB 21 Aug, one HB 22 Aug, poor totals. Laughing Gull: ad Charlotte 19 Aug, another Parma 21 Aug, im BB 15 Aug, all (FN). Little Gull: arr ad Manitou 24 Aug. **THAYER'S GULL:** first-year bird IB 24 Aug (FN).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Com. Nighthawk: max 20 Rochester 26 Aug, low. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max ten Burroughs-Audubon Nature Center in July.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr Richmond 27 Jul. Acadian Flycatcher: one singing LSP all June. Bank Swallow: max 15,000+ WL 12 Jul. Com. Raven: one HB 4 Jun (MR), only report for year from this site. Sedge Wren: max four Pt. Breeze 1-15 Aug. Gray-cheeked Thrush: last Manitou 4 Jun. Swainson's Thrush: last three Manitou 4 Jun, arr Manitou 18 Aug. Hermit Thrush: arr Manitou 20 Aug.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: arr Greece 23 Aug. Tennessee Warbler: arr two Greece 14 Aug. Nashville Warbler: arr WL 15 Aug. Cape May Warbler: arr Greece 14 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr HB 15 Aug. Black-throated Green Warbler: one out of territory Brighton 13 Jun. Pine Warbler: arr HB 13 Aug. Bay-breasted Warbler: last Manitou 2 Jun, arr Rochester 19 Aug. Blackpoll Warbler: last Canadice L 14 Jun. Wilson's Warbler: last Manitou 2 Jun, arr Manitou 23 Aug. Canada Warbler: arr HB 15 Aug.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Lincoln's Sparrow: last Manitou 2 Jun. Dark-eyed Junco: arr j Manitou 20 Aug. Pine Siskin: arr Manitou 30 Aug. Evening Grosbeak: last Manitou 4 Jun.

61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, NY 14612

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

C. K. MELIN

The summer season of 1986 was unusually cold and rainy. Stationary fronts repeatedly dominated the weather in the Region as well as throughout the State. A stationary front in the early days of June brought heavy rains – up to 2½ inches – and some localized flooding. As this front was displaced by a high pressure system from Canada, temperatures dropped to the 30's. Ithaca set a record low of 31° on 3 Jun. Cloudy and rainy weather returned from 5 througth 8 Jun, with precipitation totaling 1 to 2 inches. Rainy weather persisted until 16 Jun, when a powerful cold front crossed the state and brought severe thunderstorms. A 15-minute storm containing several downbursts with winds estimated at 70 to 90 mph hit Cortland, causing property damage estimated at more than $3 million. However, much of the Southern Tier had no more than ½ inch of rainfall during this brief period. June 17 and 18 were sunny and cool, and the remainder of the month generally was rainy.

July was characterized by four separate stationary fronts over a period totaling 13 days. As a result of heavy rains associated with these fronts, there was flooding in Broome County on 13 Jul, as well as in Steuben and Chemung Counties on 20 Jul, when the Elmira-Corning Airport reported 3½ inches of rain. July usually is New York's sunniest month, but sunshine was scarce this year. However, there was indication that the season's heavy rains may have benefited some crops, as corn and fruits were rated in good to excellent condition. By late August, apple and pear harvests were underway with above average yields and good quality.

Early August was characterized by another stationary front from the 1st to the 3rd, with up to 4 inches of rain in the Southern Tier. Thunderstorms on 6 Aug brought more flooding in Broome County, and 3+ inches of rain was recorded in Deposit. A cool high pressure system, bringing much sunshine, passed through on 12 and 13 Aug. Severe thunderstorms returned on 15 Aug, when Ithaca received 3.3 inches of rain in a 10-hour period. The final 4 days of August were all much colder than normal. Daytime highs in the Region were only in the 40's or 50's during this period.

The abnormally wet weather had many noticeable effects on birds this season. High water levels virtually eliminated shorebird habitats, and although many shorebird species were reported after mid-July, there were few individual birds. Three individuals or fewer of Black-bellied Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, and Solitary, Semipalmated, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers were reported. There were no reports of Semipalmated Plover or of either dowitcher species.

During June, several observers reported difficulty in finding birds, particularly warblers and flycatchers. The usual number of warbler species were reported. However, individuals were more difficult to find than usual. As a group, the warblers either were present in substantially lower numbers, or present and too cold, wet, or busy searching for food to sing. Swallows, as a group, may have

been affected substantially by the season's adverse weather conditions. Purple Martins were absent or scarce, and there was only one report of Northern Rough-winged Swallow. Two known swallow nesting sites were unused this sesaon: the Bank Swallow colony at Ithaca's Larch Meadows, and the Cliff Swallow colony at Big Flats. Grassland sparrow species, such as Vesper, Grasshopper, and Henslow's, were scarce or unreported this season. These species were present early in June at the usual locations at the Arnot Forest, although their breeding success following the June cold spell is not known.

Two species, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Cedar Waxwing, may have benefited from abundant summer fruit crops. Those two species were present all season and reported in substantial numbers. At Willseyville on 31 Jul there were 200+ Cedar Waxwings and 40 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Black Cherry, Wild Grape, Viburnum and Dogwood species all produced abundantly this season.

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Abbreviations: MNWR–Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two reports, an unspecified number all season on Keuka Lake and two in breeding plumage at the north end of Cayuga Lake in July; no evidence of nesting, although the north end of Cayuga Lake has an extensive area of open water and cattail marsh, bordered by wooded swamp. Pied-billed Grebe: two ad feeding two fledged y near Elmira in July. Horned Grebe: two Keuka Lake during June and July. Double-crested Cormorant: present all season Seneca Lake and MNWR, where not yet breeding although numbers appear to be increasing steadily. Least Bittern: two Cayuga Marsh 20 Jun. Great Blue Heron: an unofficial count of 80 nests MNWR. Great Egret: unspecified number MNWR 8 Jul, also Corning 1 Aug. Black-crowned Night-Heron: Treman Marina 21 Jun and MNWR July, only reports. Brant: one Cayuga Lake 23 and 28 Jun. Canada Goose: max 400 MNWR July census. Wood Duck: max 630 MNWR Jun census. Green-winged Teal: max 240 MNWR Aug census. Am. Black Duck: virtually absent throughout Region all season, with the exception of official MNWR counts of 70 on Aug census and fewer than 10 during June and July. Mallard: max 460 MNWR Aug census. N. Pintail: nine MNWR 19 Aug, only report. Blue-winged Teal: max 280 MNWR 26 Aug. N. Shoveler: no reports. Gadwall: max 20 MNWR 15 Jul, none elsewhere. Am. Wigeon: max 10 MNWR 26 Aug. Redhead: no reports. Ring-necked Duck: im m Himan Swamp near Alpine for several weeks in July. Hooded Merganser: six 23 Jul MNWR only report. Ruddy Duck: six MNWR 18 Jun only report.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: present all season MNWR, several other reports throughout Region. Bald Eagle: one im and three ad MNWR all season; one ad had been hacked at MNWR in 1978. N. Harrier: f Big Flats area 26 and 31 Aug only report. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks: no reports. N. Goshawk: one near Ithaca 21 Jul and a pair near a traditional nest site in East Corning all season, but nesting not confirmed this season. Red-shouldered Hawk: conspicuously absent. Broad-winged Hawk: 14 Jul Hammond Hill only report. Red-tailed Hawk: only reported in the Ithaca area. Am. Kestrel: scarcer than usual. Merlin: im flying southward over Mt. Zoar 6 Aug (D. Clements). Ring-necked Pheasant: several reports throughout Region. Wild Turkey: increasing throughout Region, max four ad with 20 y. Virginia Rail: two singles from the Corning area 27 Jul and 29 Aug, only reports. Sora: no reports. Com. Moorhen: scarcer than usual in the Corning area, no other reports. Am. Coot: max 10 MNWR 8 Jul. Upland Sandpiper: max seven Elmira area, only one other report. **WHIMBREL:** one King Ferry 19 Jul, fourth in the past 15 years. Com. Snipe: reported frequently at Corning Pond all season, only reports.

Wilson's Phalarope: ad m feeding actively in pools left by heavy rains at Geneva Lake State Park 5-6 Jul. Bonaparte's Gull: max four Geneva Lake State Park 5 Jul. Ring-billed Gull: hundreds reported in cultivated fields throughout Region all season, no evidence of nesting. Herring Gull: virtually absent all season. Caspian Tern: three singles from Cayuga and Seneca Lakes. Com. Tern: two July reports from Cayuga Village and MNWR. Black Tern: one MNWR 26 Jul only report.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: only one report. Black-billed Cuckoo: no reports. Com. Barn-Owl: no reports. E. Screech-Owl: only one report. Great Horned Owl: single report of one being harassed daily by crows along Sing Sing Creek in the Elmira area, followed by one immature vocalizing at night. Barred Owl: at least one fledged from a traditional nest site in Sapsucker Woods, only report. N. Saw-whet Owl: one heard Ithaca in late July, followed by a similar report a few days later in the same vicinity. Com. Nighthawk: very few reports. Whip-poor-will: not reported in the usual areas this season. Red-headed Woodpecker: not reported.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Acadian Flycatcher: one territorial m at a traditional site in the Arnot Forest early June but absent the following week during the Laboratory of Ornithology field course, which took place during the period of extreme cold; breeding has not yet been confirmed at this site. **WESTERN KINGBIRD:** Dryden 6 Jul (NYSARC), seven previous Regional records, all since 1960. Fish Crow: present Ithaca as of 16 Jun, no reports after this date. White-breasted Nuthatch: two pairs nested in D. Clement's bluebird houses. Brown Creeper: nest located at Hammond Hill State Forest June; breeding success unknown. Carolina Wren: territorial and present in greater than usual numbers in the Ithaca area, but few other reports. Marsh Wren: no local reports and scarce at MNWR. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: four Ithaca reports including a report of breeding.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: one banded by M. Lerch 24 Aug only report. Brewster's Warbler: single Slaterville 30 Jun and Connecticut Hill in June. Golden-winged Warbler: no reports. Prairie Warbler: one Michigan Hollow 21 Jul. Cerulean Warbler: several territorial males MNWR 3 Jun; also 3+ territorial males near Ithaca early June; more than usual at both sites. Prothonotary Warbler: absent from its traditional site at MNWR 3 Jun.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Bobolink: present in substantial numbers, max 1500+ Ithaca 7 Jul. Brown-headed Cowbird: not as many as usual.

84-A Turkey Hill Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

JAY G. LEHMAN

After a beautiful, warm, and sunny May, June weather returned to normal. The highest temperature for June at Binghamton was recorded on 1 Jun, leaving area residents with the distinct impression that summer was here in May this year. June was wet, with 4.8 inches of rain recorded at Binghamton. But if June was wet, then July was a flood with seventeen days of rain recorded at Binghamton and a near record 7.36 (!) inches, nearly surpassing the record 7.4 inches set in 1956. July temperatures were about normal, except for two short cool periods during the first half of the month. One wonders whether all this rain in June and July had a deleterious effect on nesting success. August also seemed wet, but the 3.0 inches of rain were about 0.4 inches below normal. Perhaps, this impression was due to the seemingly higher than normal amount of cloudy weather in August. The period ended with several days of unseasonably cool weather, with mean temperatures five to ten degrees below the norm. With all the cloudy, rainy weather sandwiched between an unseasonably warm May and a cool end to August, the summer seemed short.

Now that Atlas field work is completed, reports of some species are conspicuously absent. No reports of American Bittern, Pied-billed Grebe, American Black Duck, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Barred Owl, Sora, and Red-headed Woodpecker were received, and few Hooded Merganser, Broad-winged Hawk, Eastern Screech- and Great Horned Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Horned Lark, and Nashville Warbler were reported. Black-crowned Night-Heron, Least Bittern, Sedge Wren, and Whip-poor-will also were not reported, but these species were scarce even during the years of intensive Atlas field work. Ring-necked Pheasant and Purple Martin still are uncommon in this Region and, unfortunately, Golden-winged Warbler is still decreasing. Few cuckoos were seen even though tent caterpillars appear to be increasing in certain parts of the Region. Essentially no shorebird migration was reported, mostly due to lack of effort.

Despite these negatives, there were a number of encouraging reports. Six Common Mergansers were present on the Chenango River near Binghamton well into June. Could they be invading from known breeding sites in Delaware Co.? Turkey Vultures are continuing to expand their range into the northern part of the Region, especially Chenango Co. Bald Eagle sightings are increasing, undoubtedly due to the hacking program. Upland Sandpiper, which is rarely reported here, was found in good numbers.

Several unusual southern species which are expanding north into this Region were reported. Acadian Flycatcher from two locations in eastern Broome Co. are the second and third Regional summer records in eight years. Confirmed breeding of Orchard Oriole in Owego is the first such record for the Region in eight years. Because most previous Regional reports of Orchard Oriole come from sites close to the Susquehanna River, northward expansion along its drainage is suspected. Northern Mockingbird at three southern tier sites and three sites in Chenango

Co. during June and July also may indicate further northward expansion. Of the other southern species showing northward range expansion, Tufted Titmouse still are more common in the southern tier (reported from six sites – Oneonta and the southern tier), whereas Hooded Warbler and Carolina Wren were reported only in the north and not in the south.

Les Bemont in Vestal banded two young Common Nighthawks in the nest and still unable to fly on the rather late date of 6 Aug. He wondered "if the wet weather slowed insect procurement and their development" and if they were ready to migrate when he observed pre-migration flocking at Vestal by 28 Aug only three weeks later. The wet weather in July also may have contributed to the early flocking of Chimney Swifts at Chenango Forks on 31 Jul and to lower than normal numbers in Norwich in late August.

I made a special effort to monitor species associated with spruce plantations in Chenango Co. Golden-crowned Kinglet and Yellow-rumped Warbler remain common in appropriate habitat. Swainson's Thrush was present at four previously known sites, but spruce logging and thinning may be decreasing their numbers. One location near McDonough has been abandoned, the only apparent change being thinning, while at a second site in Pharsalia Game Management Area which was being logged, only one singing bird was found where at least four were found in previous years. A Pine Siskin reported on the Corbettsville BBS was found at Sky Lake, where spruce stands provide good habitat. I also surveyed Vesper, Grasshopper, and Henslow's Sparrows. Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrow are still present in known locations in reasonable numbers. However, Henslow's Sparrow was scarce, and several sites were abandoned this year.

The species list of 142 plus one hybrid is about average for a year without Atlas data. Snowy Egret, Virginia Rail, Black Tern and Acadian Flycatcher are rarities. Upland Sandpiper, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rusty Blackbird, and Palm Warbler are unusual but not really rare. Data from US Fish & Wildlife Breeding Bird Surveys were received for the Oxford, Corbettsville, Coventryville, Lisle, Whitney Point, Downsville, and Milford routes.

Observers: Cutler & Jeanette Baldwin, Judy Bell, Les Bemont, Bill Breidinger, Nancy Cannon, Mildred & Lynn Clark, John Carpenter, Chad Covey, Anna & Marilyn Davis, Louise Dean, Delhi Bird Club, Mary Dobinsky, Jane Doig, George Dropp, Pauline Grey, Marsha Guzewich, John Gustafson, Shirley Hartman, Phyllis & Eldon Keith, Hugh Kingery, Margaret Layton, Jay Lehman, Florence Linaberry, Harriet Marsi, Leona McDowell, Robert Pantle, Dick Parker, Marie Petuh, Harriet Robinson, Joe Sedlacek, Julian Shepherd, Bill Toner, Kathryn Wilson, Don Windsor.

Abbreviations: bnd–banded; B&DS&G–Bailey & Dickinson Sand & Gravel; Bing–Binghamton; Clsv–Colesville, Crbtsv–Corbettsville; Cvntrvl–Coventryville; Downsv–Downsville; End–Endwell; Norw–Norwich; OPM–Oneonta, Portlandville, Milford; Phars–Pharsalia; Plym–Plymouth; REEC–Rogers Environmental Education Center; Wind–Windsor, Vest–Vestal.

LOONS-DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: three nests Rum Hill, Cooperstown (HK), only CO. **SNOWY EGRET:** two Oneonta to Delhi area 30 Jul (PG); one Goodyear L 8 Aug (GD), unusual number. Green-backed Heron: one per week to late Jul; arr one Homer 23 Aug (BB). Canada Goose: max six Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM); pair & goslings Rum Hill Jul (HK), only CO. Wood Duck: max ten OPM 12 Aug (MD, KW). Mallard: six im OPM

18 Jun (MD, KW) & a pair Cvntrvl 16 Jun (JS), only CO. Hooded Merganser: one Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM) & N Clsv 28 Jun (JS), few reports. Com. Merganser: one Dela June, normal breeding site; arr two Walton 24 Aug (SH).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: one Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM) & three Mt Upton 9 Jun (JL), unusual Chen; arr three Richfield Springs 30 Aug (MD). Osprey: one Dela June, last; arr one Truxton 18 Aug (PK). Bald Eagle: im Long Pd 24 Jun (JC); arr second-year Chen L mid-Jul thru Aug (CC); one Oneonta Mt 29 Aug (HR), increasing. N. Harrier: one Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM) & one Phars 4 Jul (DW), breeding; arr one Delhi 26 Aug (SH). Sharp-shinned Hawk: three locations Jun; max two OPM 23 Jun (MD, KW); arr one OPM 20 Aug (MD, KW). Cooper's Hawk: six locations to last week Jul; nest likely Cherry Valley 10 Jul (HK), good breeding numbers. Broad-winged Hawk: two OPM 18 Jun (MD, KW), few reports. Am. Kestrel: pair & six im Cvntrvl 16 Jun (JS), only CO; max 13 OPM 12 Aug (MD, KW). Ring-necked Pheasant: one Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM) only report. Ruffed Grouse: five locations; one f & 12 im N Clsv 18 Jun (JS) & im in barn Cortland 9 Aug (JG), only CO. Wild Turkey: three f & 17 im N. Clsv 3 Aug; similar mixed flocks Chen, Tiog mid-Jul thru Aug, increasing. **VIRGINIA RAIL:** one REEC 1 Jun (MG), breeding suspected; max two calling Upper Lisle Aug (HM). Killdeer: six/BBS route; largest post-breeding flock 25 Endw 12 Aug (JS). Solitary Sandpiper: arr three N Norw 9 Aug (JL, DW). Spotted Sandpiper: only three sites; arr two Cvntrvl 26 Jul (JS). Upland Sandpiper: one each near E Springville & Salt Springville Jul (HK) & Center Lisle 6 Jul (ML, MP, NK, JB), all breeding?. Am. Woodcock: only three sites. Com. Snipe: only three sites Jun. Ring-billed Gull: max 100 Broome Landfill Jun-Aug (HM). Herring Gull: only Tiog Jun-Aug (LD). **BLACK TERN:** two B&DS&G 2 Jun (MP, OC), first Regional record in eight years.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: ten/BBS, increasing. Black-billed Cuckoo: one ad & nest Sharon Springs Jul (HK); one Truxton 19 Aug (RP), low. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: only one Delhi 7 Aug (MC). E. Screech-Owl: only four sites. Great Horned Owl: only four sites. Com. Nighthawk: one Norw 7 Jun (JL), late migrant; arr 11 Oneonta 20 Aug (KW). Chimney Swift: max breeding nine Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM); sky full Chen Forks 31 Jul (A & MD), early flocking?; last flock 20 Norw 30 Aug (JL). Ruby-throated Hummingbird: max three Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Belted Kingfisher: max three OPM 23 Jun (MD, KW). Red-bellied Woodpecker: only one Tiog Jun-Aug (LD). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: ad & im N. Clsv (JS), only CO; max three Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh) & Lisle BBS 23 Jun (RP). Downy Woodpecker: max six Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Hairy Woodpecker: only three total on five BBS. N. Flicker: max six Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Pileated Woodpecker: only singles six sites.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Rum Hill 21 Jun (HK), late; arr one REEC 30 Aug (DW). E. Wood-Pewee: max eight Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh). **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER:** singles Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL) & Windsor 27 Jul (JS). Willow Flycatcher: 12 sites, above average. Alder Flycatcher: six sites, above average. Least Flycatcher: max 16 Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). E. Phoebe: max nine Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Great Crested Flycatcher: max four Cvntrvl BBS 19 Jun (LB). E. Kingbird: max breeding seven Oxford & Crbtsv BBS; max post-breeding 18 OPM 22 Jul (MD, KW). Horned Lark: only two OPM 10 Jun (MD, KW). Purple Martin: only report Tioga. Tree Swallow: max 103 bnd Homer (BT); 20-50 using bluebird houses at four sites Broo (JS). N. Rough-winged Swallow: six nestlings bnd McGraw (BT), only CO. Bank Swallow: 75 B&DS&G (MP) & 50 Norw (JL) both 28 Jun, only two colonies; eight Winds 30 Aug (JS), late. Cliff Swallow: max 14 Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh); ten Crbtsv BBS (JL), new site. Barn Swallow: 38 Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM), breeding max; 65 OPM 12 Aug (MD, KW), post-breeding flocking. Blue Jay: max 17 Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Am. Crow: max 57 Cvntrvl BBS 19 Jun (LB). Black-capped Chickadee: max 50 OPM 13 Aug (MD, KW). Tufted Titmouse: max three Oxford BBS (HM). Red-breasted Nuthatch: max seven Plym/Phars 28 & 29

Jun (JL). White-breasted Nuthatch: max three Cvntrv BBS 19 Jun (LB). Brown Creeper: five sites; max two Norw Jun-Jul (JL). Carolina Wren: arr Norw mid-Aug (JL); max three Norw Aug (CW). House Wren: max 19 Lisle BBS 22 Jun (RP); nine bnd N Coles (JS), only CO. Winter Wren: four locations. Marsh Wren: only two REEC 9 Aug (JL, DW). Golden-crowned Kinglet: six locations; max 29 four sites Chen 28 & 29 Jun (JL). Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: one Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh) & pair FY Otsego Jul (HK), still scarce. E. Bluebird: bred successfully on trails four sites Broo (JS) & two sites Cort (BT). Veery: max 20 Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh). Hermit Thrush: max eight Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh). Wood Thrush: max 24 Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Am. Robin: max 61 Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Gray Catbird: max 17 Lisle BBS 22 Jun (RP) & Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Brown Thrasher: max three OPM 10 Jun (MD, KW). Cedar Waxwing: breeding max 40 Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM); post-breeding max 80 OPM 20 Aug (MD, KW). Loggerhead Shrike: one briefly glimpsed Pepacton Res 10 Jun (JS), in same block where one was seen during Atlas field work.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Solitary Vireo: max seven Phars 28 Jun (JL). Yellow-throated Vireo: max 5 Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Warbling Vireo: max five Lisle BBS 22 Jun (RP). Red-eyed Vireo: breeding max 33 Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM); migration max 26 OPM 20 Aug (MD, KW). Blue-winged Warbler: max five Norw 11 Jul (JL). Golden-winged Warbler: only two Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL) & N Clsv 20 Jun (JS). "Brewster's" Warbler: only report Norw 8 Jun (JL). Nashville Warbler: only reports Norw 8 Jul (JL) & OPM 22 Jul (MD, KW). Yellow Warbler: max 43 Crbtsv BBS (JL). Chestnut-sided Warbler: max seven Plym 29 Jun (JL). Magnolia Warbler: max 23 four sites Chen 28 & 29 Jun (JL). Black-throated Blue Warbler: max three Norw 7 Jun (JL). Yellow-rumped Warbler: max ten three sites Chen 28 & 29 Jun (JL). Black-throated Green Warbler: max 18 four sites Chen 28 & 29 Jun (JL). Blackburnian Warbler: max 25 five sites Chen 28 & 29 Jun (JL). Prairie Warbler: four sites, max four Norw 19 Jul (JL). **PALM WARBLER:** one OPM Dog Hill 13 Aug (MD, KW), very early. Black-and-white Warbler: max 12 Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh). Am. Redstart: max 18 Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh). Ovenbird: max 26 Downsvs BBS 10 Jun (JSh). N. Waterthrush: singles at six locations. Louisiana Waterthrush: only three sites; max two Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL); only nest found Candor 22 Jun (RP). Mourning Warbler: four sites; max six Phars 28 Jun (JL). Com. Yellowthroat: max 31 Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Hooded Warbler: pair Norw Jun-Jul (JL) & one Otsego Jul (HK), few reports. Canada Warbler: three sites; max eight OPM 18 Jun (MD, KW).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: max 18 Downsv BBS (JSh). N. Cardinal: max seven Lisle BBS 22 Jun (RP) & Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 12 Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Indigo Bunting: max 12 Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Rufous-sided Towhee: max eight Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Chipping Sparrow: max 31 Crbtsv BBS (JL). Field Sparrow: max 12 N Clsv 14, 20 & 28 Jun (JS). Vesper Sparrow: six sites, doing well; max seven Plym 29 Jun (JL). Savannah Sparrow: at least ten birds at seven sites, excellent. Grasshopper Sparrow: seven sites, excellent; max six ad with four im Pink Hill Chen 20 Jul (JL). Henslow's Sparrow: only three sites; max four singing near Leesville Otsego 14 Jul (HK). Song Sparrow: max 45 Cvntrvl BBS 19 Jun (LB). Swamp Sparrow: max six Cvntrvl BBS 26 Jul (JS). White-throated Sparrow: max six Oxford BBS 7 Jun (HM). Dark-eyed Junco: max 11 Downsv BBS 10 Jun (JSh). Bobolink: max 35 N Clsv 20 Jun (JS). Red-winged Blackbird: max 90 Lisle BBS 22 Jun (RP). Rusty Blackbird: one Chen Valley SP 16 Aug (A & MD), very early. E. Meadowlark: max 12 N Clsv 19 Jul (JS). Brown-headed Cowbird: max 15 N Clsv 8 & 20 Jun (JS). Orchard Oriole: f feeding im Owego 17 & 18 Jun (C & JB), unusual. N. Oriole: max 20 Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL). Purple Finch: max ten two sites Chen stateland 28 Jun (JL). House Finch: max 25 N Clsv 20 Jul (JS). Pine Siskin: only one Crbtsv BBS 8 Jun (JL), uncommon. Am. Goldfinch: max 35 OPM 12, 13 & 20 Aug (MD, KW).

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REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

PAUL A. DEBENEDICTIS

The summer 1986 was generally unremarkable. Temperatures and precipitation were a little on the cool and dry side every month. Rainfall, when it came, tended to be heavy but in many places the ground dried nearly completely after rainfalls. Water level on Lake Ontario and all of the larger lakes in the Region was very high, with corresponding reductions in shorebird and marsh habitats.

Observers generally felt that numbers of birds were down somewhat. However, comparison of the five USF&W breeding bird surveys completed in the Region this summer with earlier totals from these surveys reveals no consistent trends. All species were present in numbers close to their long term averages and there were as many pluses and minuses in the small range of variation that was observed. Opinion seems to be colored more by the lack of migrants than by changes in breeding bird populations.

After six seasons of atlasing, most observers took this summer off and reports were somewhat lighter than usual. Atlasing, although officially over, was not entirely finished here. A number of observations that supplement the official results were obtained. These records, in which the Atlas block number is listed as well, are a mix of upgrades to the nesting status of previously reported species as well as additions to the list species found in a block. Some of the latter records came from blocks with adequate coverage, demonstrating the potential that many blocks still have. It is especially worthwile to acquire and report such records for the next four or five years, not so much to show deficiencies in the current Atlas coverage but rather to affirm that a species is present now for workers who might encounter it when the **next** atlas is begun at the turn of the century.

An especially notable effort in this direction was begun by F. G. Scheider, who resurveyed the blocks (numbers 4x79 and 4x80, where x runs from about 4 to 7) that lie at higher elevations in northern Oneida County astride the Black River drainage and between the Adirondacks and the Tug Hill Plateau. About 60 species had been reported from most of these blocks, while blocks to the east and west averaged about 80 species. So far Scheider has added about 20 species to each of the blocks he visited, including several blocks for which he contributed the earlier, cursory survey. As these results will be presented separately when his survey is completed over the next summer or two, only the most significant results are reported here. In general, Scheider found that all of the highland forest species reported to the east and west also occur throughout this area, which has a great potential as a new area for nesting warblers in the Region. The most surprising discovery this season was a pair of Bay-breasted Warblers with a fledgling in a spruce stand near Westernville on 19 Jul in block 4680C. This is the southwesternmost nesting for New York.

Other interesting reports include Double-crested Cormorants still present without nesting on Oneida Lake in June; the pair of Osprey which nested (unsuccessfully) in Dinglehole Swamp, n Onondaga Co., and probably the same pair which led fledged young to Beaver Lake last summer; the Carolina Wren pair in DeWitt

(block 4076B) which waited until this year to fledge young; and a new, but not unexpected, locality provided for Pine Warbler when a family group was found near Camden on 10 Aug in block 4379C, only the sixth block in the Region in which nesting has been confirmed.

The summer season spans both migrations. Marge Rusk found a small group of shorebirds at Sandy Pond on 7 Jun, including the last Semipalmated Plover and Semipalmated Sandpiper of the spring migration, and the only Red Knot, Sanderling and White-rumped Sandpiper. She also reported very late, probable migrant Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Northern Parula from other localities.

The fall migration began with the return of shorebirds in late June and the passage of Yellow Warblers in July. The shorebird migration did not lack variety but, with the exception of an outstanding Whimbrel count, numbers were very low. Other marshbirds were scarce, and Great Egret and Black-crowned Night-Heron were the only non-nesting herons reported. Landbird variety was poor, with only a few obvious migrants by late August. There was little sign of incursive species. Red-breasted Nuthatch reports came almost entirely from nesting areas, and there were a total of two each of Pine Siskin and Red Crossbill reported, the latter from possible nesting areas in northern Oneida Co. Dorothy Crumb had a most unseasonable male Evening Grosbeak visit her house in northern Pompey township on 3 Jul.

A total of 188 species, as well as hybrid Blue-winged x Golden-winged Warblers, were reported, which is below average but not unexpected given the cessation of Atlas field work. The only rarities of the season were the Whimbrel and Bay-breasted Warbler noted above.

Contributors: Dorothy Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, John Hanyak, Scott Harris, Ruth Knight, Jeanne Lally, Jean Noroski, Belle Peebles, Robert E. Post, Margaret S. Rusk, F. G. Scheider, Roy Slack, Gerald A. Smith, Betty Starr, Magdalena Stooks.

Abbreviations: BBFS–Ben Burtt feeder survey; BBS–breeding bird survey; DH–Derby Hill, Oswego Co.; FH–Fairhaven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity, Cayuga Co.; LOL–Lake Ontario littoral, Oswego Co.; NPT–northern Pompey township; SPd–Sandy Pond, Oswego Co.; StMC–Saint Mary's Cemetery, DeWitt, Onon Co.; SVB–Sylvan and Verona Beach, Oneida Co.; Syr–Syracuse.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two calling Redfield Res 2 Aug; arr SPd 28 Aug. Pied-billed Grebe: one Cicero Swamp 6 Jul, only report. Double-crested Cormorant: max 267 SPd 9 Aug. Am. Bittern: about six reports LOL only. Least Bittern: one Poolsbrook 23 Aug. Great Egret: singles FH 21 Jun (ph MSR) and Redfield Res 26 Aug (SH). Black-crowned Night-Heron: one near Ira 4 Jun probably from group at Snake Swamp; one Poolsbrook 3 Aug (JL). Mute Swan: three Poolsbrook 9 Jul (MSR). Canada Goose: Long Lake in Aug (RLE). Green-winged Teal: males FH 21 Jun and SPd 20 Jul possible nesters. N. Pintail: arr SVB 15 Aug. Am. Wigeon: arr DH 24 Aug. White-winged Scoter: two SPd 18 Aug and 1 DH 23 Aug rather early. Com. Merganser: FL Redfield Res in Aug.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: ad with FL Sand Ridge Bog 30 Aug (MSR). Bald Eagle: im DH 4 Aug, only report. N. Harrier: two near Constantia only reports away from n Onei. Sharp-shinned Hawk: about a dozen reports, probably increasing. Merlin: arr SPd 31 Aug, early. Ring-necked Pheasant: about four reports only. Sora: two Popleton Rd 27 Jul (BP). Black-bellied Plover: arr SPd 9 Aug. Lesser Golden Plover: arr 19 near

SVB 31 Aug. Semipalmated Plover: arr Onon L 14 Jul. **WHIMBREL:** record max 212 DH (GAS, see Field Note). Greater Yellowlegs: arr Onon L 16 Jul. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Onon L 29 Jun. Solitary Sandpiper: arr Oswe 3 Aug, very scarce. Upland Sandpiper: last (?). Oneida airport 26 Aug. Ruddy Turnstone: arr SVB 30 Jul. Red Knot: arr SVB 30 Jul. Sanderling: arr SVB 24 Jul. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr SVB 19 Jul, max 95 there 24 Jul. Least Sandpiper: arr Onon L 29 Jun. White-rumped Sandpiper: arr SVB 6 Aug. Baird's Sandpiper: arr Onon L 31 Aug, late. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr SPd 28 Aug, late, scarce. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr Onon L 14 Jul. Com. Snipe: still winnowing n Onei 27 Jul, late. Wilson's Phalarope: f Onon L 29 Jun; one SVB 3 Aug. Jaeger *species:* one DH 23 Aug. Bonaparte's Gull: arr SVB 19 Jul. Caspian Tern: 33, including copulating pair, SPd 7 Jun no doubt foreshadowing the nesting in Region 6; arr Onon L 9 Aug. Black Tern: one Poolsbrook 13 Jun (JL) only report away from LOL.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: about a dozen reports June and July, up slightly. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: none. Whip-poor-will: only one Vienna Twn in June where up to 10 a decade ago (MSR). Belted Kingfisher: UN 3780C, new to block.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one Nelson Swamp 14 Jun (MSR), ? late migrant though present here to at least 25 Jun last summer; arr SPd 28 Aug. Bank Swallow: 100 pairs in new colony at Verona Mills (BP). Tufted Titmouse: pair with three j Onei 9 Jul (BP). Red-breasted Nuthatch: no incursion evident. Carolina Wren: one Pumpkin Hollow 27 Jun. Sedge Wren: up to three Clay 28 Jun-17 Jul. N. Mockingbird: pair Onei all season; pair scolding dog Oswe new to 3781C.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Philadelphia Vireo: arr SVB 31 Aug. Blue-winged Warbler: one near Minetto new to 3780C. Golden-winged Warbler: pair with FL near Minetto in 3780C. Tennessee Warbler: arr n Onei 19 Jul. Nashville Warbler: one FY Nelson Swamp 14 Jun. N. Parula: record late near Annsville 15 Jun, only report. Magnolia Warbler: arr SPd 18 Aug. Cape May Warbler: arr Tughill Plateau 19 Aug. Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr 28 Aug LOL. Black-throated Green Warbler: arr E Syr 28 Aug. Blackburnian Warbler: arr E Syr 28 Aug. Bay-breasted Warbler: arr SVB 27 Jul. Cerulean Warbler: one singing s end Skaneateles L in June new to 3874D. Black-and-white Warbler: FL near Minetto new to 3780C. Louisiana Waterthrush: one with FL Steuben new to 4680D. Hooded Warbler: one near Minetto new to 3780C. Wilson's Warbler: arr Tughill Plateau 19 Aug.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: countersinging in 3780C where only PO before. N. Cardinal: pair FY in 3780C. Vesper Sparrow: none reported after June. Grasshopper Sparrow: one n Oswe, only report. Henslow's Sparrow: four reports n Oswe, one Poolsbrook 7 Jul. Red Crossbill: singles Penn Mt 3 Aug (JL) and Vienna 20 Aug (FGS). Pine Siskin: two singles LOL after 28 Aug.

ADDENDA: N. Saw-whet Owl: total of 18 banded Noyes Sanctuary in Mar and Apr, most last week of Mar. Long-eared Owl: total of 8 banded Noyes Sanctuary 16 Mar-15 Apr. **VARIED THRUSH:** one N Syr 8-10 Mar (JN! *fide* B. Burtt), third Regional record.

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[With this report Gene Huggins resumes editorship of Region 5. Welcome back! Please send your observations to: Mr. Gene Huggins, 1065 Westmoreland Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210.]

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL and GERALD A. SMITH

Wet, cold, windy. That was the summer weather in a nutshell. All three months of the period were 2 to 3° cooler than the 30 year average and had 70% more rain than usual. Much of the Region experienced below freezing temperatures on 3 Jun; all three months were marked by violent thunderstorms with hail falling in many localities on 16 Jun. The weather was poor for birding, but no observers reported adverse effects from the weather on nesting success of upland birds. However, there were marked effects on waterfowl, marsh birds and shorebirds. Sheila Cerwonka found American Bittern more prevalent in transitory wetlands along roadsides but felt that Virginia Rail may have been flooded out. As evident from the species accounts, Gerry Smith found waterfowl and shorebirds extremely scarce at ElDorado Beach Preserve due to the high level of Lake Ontario. The **only** shorebirds for the period are listed in the species accounts below. The lake did not undergo its usual drop in mid-summer, resulting in the poorest shorebird flight in a decade with birds arriving late and in greatly reduced numbers.

A total of 129 species including 18 waders and waterfowl, 22 shorebirds, and 77 passerines were reported. Double-crested Cormorant continues to increase along the St. Lawrence River, but there still is no confirmaton of it breeding there. According to C. Weseloh, the colony on Little Galloo Island in Lake Ontario contained 1400 nests in early June. Away from the colony site maximum numbers were 1-300 per day at ElDorado Beach in June. The rapid expansion of the Little Galloo colony has fueled increased grumbling from fishing guides and some fishermen regarding alleged depredations on fish stocks. Although no evidence supports these claims, they are receiving increasing attention from the media. As cormorant populations grow, so will the controversy.

Summer reports of Bald Eagle may bode well for possible reoccupation of more of its historic breeding range in the future. These include a first-year immature at ElDorado Beach; from 31 May through mid-July, a fourth-year subadult there 20 Jul to mid-Aug, and an immature on Rainbow Falls Reservoir in So. Colton in mid-Aug. In addition, two young were again fledged from the nest in Jefferson Co.

S. Harris and K. Griffith report several days' observations from Lorraine and Parishville, respectively. A summary of their counts of migration insectivores is instructive. During their ten birding-days they found no Eastern Wood-Pewee but 11 Great Crested Flycatcher and 28 Eastern Kingbird. Of the spot-breasted thrushes they saw 15 Veery, 9 Hermit Thrush and 10 Wood Thrush. They found only one Yellow-throated Vireo as well as four Warbling and 37 Red-eyed Vireos. Among 12 species of warbler were one Magnolia, four Black-and-white, 13 Ovenbird and one Mourning but neither Blackburnian nor Northern Waterthrush. They found no Scarlet Tanager.

With regard to species expanding their ranges into this Region, Turkey Vulture continues to increase in highland sections with counts of one to four per day

throughout the Region. Many reports of Wild Turkey from the Sixberry Lake area near Redwood, Potsdam and Colton are evidence of expanding populations. No Red-bellied Woodpecker were reported. G. smith found, as usual, a pair of Alder Flycatcher at ElDorado where Willow Flycatcher predominates. This is not the case yet in St. Lawrence Co., but I observed a singing Willow Flycatcher in a brushy marsh in Lisbon 5 Jun. Sightings of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher by Fiona Reed on 10 May and 28 June in Canton, near Russell, are among the very few reports from St. Lawrence Co. Four young-of-the-year Tufted Titmice were observed in Henderson by Lee Chamberlaine feeding at his hummingbird feeder! P. Novak saw Northern Mockingbirds in the towns of Antwerp and Lyme, Jefferson Co., on 9 Jul and 7 Jun, respectively. He also heard "a perfect Blue-winged Warbler song at a woods-pasture edge" in Alexandria, Jefferson Co. 3 Jul, but did not see the bird. Northern Cardinal continues to increase throughout the Region, with more reports from the rural foothills in St. Lawrence Co. House Finch now outnumber Purple Finch in the Canton area and Lee Chamberlaine calls it "a pest" in Henderson, where Purple Finch also was down. P. Novak observed a possible family group of Evening Grosbeak near the Bog River Flow, Colton; L. Chamberlaine reports six ad at Henderson 19 Jul – almost 2 months earlier than his previous records, and four eating cherries on 25 Jul. There were two reports of the species in St. Lawrence Co. in Aug.

There were several reports of grassland sparrows including a singing male Clay-colored Sparrow at Limerick Cedars Preserve June through mid-July and a second in Clayton 8 Jul (G. Smith). These sightings are a first county record for Jefferson Co., and the first Regional sightings since 1972. A pair of Grasshopper Sparrow also was resident at Limerick Cedars during June and July, and P. Novak reported singing males from ten sites in Brownsville, Hounsfield, Henderson and Lyme, a major distribution center which may not show up in the Breeding Bird Atlas. Vesper Sparrow was reported from Hounsfield and Parishville.

P. Novak spent the summer searching the region unsuccessfully for **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE,** but P. Kelly observed two im. with one parent in Brasher Falls on 7 Jul – the first breeding in the county in several years. In addition, G. Smith saw one shrike near Oak Pt. 15 Jul. Other noteworthy sightings include nesting(!) Caspian Tern and Lincoln's Sparrow at unexpected localities.

Lee Chamberlaine reported migratory movements of several species in mid-Aug, including Northern Flicker, American Crow, Bobolink (heavy – with over 100 per day), and Northern Oriole. American Robin began migration in early August while the last broods were yet to fledge. House Wren was gone by mid-Aug and the first migrant Red-breasted Nuthatch arrived on 31 Aug.

Contributors: Carol Budd, Sheila Cerwonka, Lee Chamberlaine, Ken Crowell, John Green, Kevin Griffith, Scott Harris, Everett & Mildred Howard, Paul Kelly, Paul Novak, Fiona Reed, Gerry Smith, Brian Watson and C. Weseloh.

Abbreviations: EDB–ElDorado Beach Preserve; ULLWMA–Upper and Lower Lakes Wildlife Management Area; SLR–St. Lawrence River.

LOONS-DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: singles EDB 22 Jun and 10 Aug (GAS) probably involve the same summering individual; on the latter date in appeared to be in heavy molt and in poor physical condition. Com. Loon: scattered single and pairs present

SLR but no evidence of successful breeding; two Hyde L, Town of Theresa, 31 Jul, are unusual for summer and may be non-breeders. Pied-billed Grebe: successful breeding at ULLWMA and five Canton 6 Jun, only reports. Least Bittern: singles Black Pd WMA 12 Jul and Stony Creek Marsh 18 Jul (LBC), only reports. Great Blue Heron: 746 nests at Ironsides Is. SLR is a new record high count for that colony and represents approximately a 14% increase over 1985. Black-crowned Night-Heron: approximately 80 nests on Little Galloo Island 7 July (GAS). Mute Swan: two ad and seven j PRWMA (LBC). Am. Black Duck: a few singles only from lowland areas, where they are gone as a breeder. Mallard: max 44 EDB 23 Aug. N. Pintail: arr one EDB 22 Jul, only report away from SLR breeding areas. Hooded Merganser: female and four young Stockholm 22 Jul, only report. Com. Merganser: two at ULLWMA 16 Jul and one to nine per day EDB 9-25 Jul probably are post-breeding wanderers; max 30 EDB 22 Aug.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: one EDB 13 Jun, presumably a late spring migrant; a new nest in the town of Clayton was destroyed by a wind storm; lack of migrants along L. Ontario during Aug is unusual. Sharp-shinned Hawk: ad near Henderson Harbor 3 Jul, only report. Cooper's Hawk: one to two per day, scattered. Am. Kestrel: one to three per day, still scarce. Ruffed Grouse: many ad with y during June (LBC). Black-bellied Plover: arr one 9 Aug; 1-11 per day late Aug. Killdeer: scattered one to two per day only; **scarce.** Greater Yellowlegs: one 18 Aug only report. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr one 13 Jul, only report and unbelievably scarce!! Solitary Sandpiper: two-six per day June-July, four-ten per day in August; max 16 on 30-31 Jul; the only shorebird at EDB in reasonably normal numbers. Ruddy Turnstone: arr and max 7 EDB on 31 Jul; one to six per day thereafter. Red Knot: one EDB 30-31 Aug only report. Sanderling: arr EDB 23 Jul; two-eight per day 30 Jul-31 Aug. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr three EDB 22 Jul; max 69 on 31 Jul is 10-15% of normal max. Least Sandpiper: arr two EDB 23 Jul, two-eight per day to 31 Aug. **CASPIAN TERN:** 112 nests counted on Little Galloo I on 7 Jul (CW, details to be published separately) is first documented nesting colony in the state. Com. Tern: 522 nests recorded along the SLR and E. Lake Ontario is 10% below the 1982-86 average; most colonies continue to experience poor reproductive success. Forster's Tern: one EDB 25 Jul-3 Aug, always unusual in this Region. Black Tern: a few reports of one to four per day, very scarce; this species appears to be in severe decline locally.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Barred Owl: one Parishville 30 Jun, only owl reported. Mourning Dove: continues to increase. Black-billed Cuckoo: several reports. Com. Nighthawk: none by LBC, but several in Massena-Louisville area through period. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: doing well, 14 reported by five observers. Red-headed Woodpecker: a pair in Gouverneur 10 Jun is unusual (PN).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Brown Creeper: only one reported. E. Bluebird: many reports indicate real increase; max 15 Stockholm during Aug (FR). Horned Lark: three separate sightings in Hounsfield 7 Jun on Watertown Breeding Bird Survey suggest local population.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Prairie Warbler: a pair at Limerick Cedars during June and July (as was the case in 1984), and singing males at Schoolhouse Rd., Brownville on 22 May and VanAnsyltyne Rd., Clayton 8 Jul (GAS and PN).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Indigo Bunting: numbers down in SLaw Co. Field Sparrow: max eight Parishville 30 Jun. Lincoln's Sparrow: two including singing male Stockholm 7 Aug (FR), unexpected at this locale. E. Meadowlark: numbers are up (LC, KC). Red Crossbill: two calling in tall spruce and pine near Hitchins Pd, Colton 10 Aug.

KLC – RD 4, Box 97, Canton, NY 13617
GAS – Derby Hill Bird Observatory, RR1, Box 498, Mexico, NY 13114

REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M. C. PETERSON

The season began auspiciously enough. On 4 Jun, Ted Mack and Bob Hagar birded from Tupper Lake north through Saranac Lake to Moira, compiling a record Franklin County "century run" of **106** species. Over the entire three-month summer period, however, only 152 species were reported; their single day effort had located two-thirds of all summer birds noted in the Region. By comparison, over two hundred species were recorded as breeders during the Atlas period, with over 180 confirmed as nesting (and remember, too, that the 1986 summer total includes migrants, as well as breeders).

What happened? Well, for one thing, it rained. It poured rain on something like 11 weekends during the summer. Shorebirds were a relative disaster, with only six species reported, and none from along the innundated beaches bordering Lake Champlain. For another thing, there were fewer observers: about 40 contributed records, and of those only about half had been active Atlas workers. For a variety of reasons, even experienced birders were far less active.

As a result, something like a quarter of all breeding birds in the Region went unreported, many of them relatively common: Green-backed Heron, Cooper's Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Woodcock, Great Horned Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Rufous-sided Towhee. Others are admittedly a bit more difficult to locate: Least Bittern, Sora, Common Moorhen, Long-eared and Short-eared Owls, Sedge and Marsh Wrens, and Grasshopper Sparrow. Some misses were more southerly birds: Eastern Screech-Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Louisiana Waterthrush. Others were northern specialties: Gray-cheeked Thrush, Philadelphia Vireo, Cape May, Bay-breasted, and Wilson's Warblers, and Rusty Blackbird. Yet even those species reported were poorly represented: Vesper Sparrow, a special concern species in NYS, was found in 82 Regional blocks between 1980-85, while this summer there was but a single report.

In spite of the adverse weather and abrupt decline in birding effort following six years of active field work for the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas project, there were a number of interesting observations. In late August, Hollis White encountered a large flock of **75** unidentified white egrets at a beaver pond on the St. Regis Indian Reservation. Turkey Vultures continued to penetrate the Adirondacks with Hamilton County sightings near Indian Lake and Speculator on 16 Jun and six frequenting the Oxbow Lake landfill all summer, still present 30 Aug. Two peregrine hack site attendants watched a **SANDHILL CRANE** fly over Blue Mountain Lake on 21 June(RC, GM *fide* Ted Mack), for only the second regional record and a first for Hamilton County and the Adirondack Park. The North American Rare Bird Alert (NARBA; B&PO) received a report of a **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** on Long Pond, Franklin County, in August for a first county record.

The most important find of the summer, however, was the discovery by Tim Barnett, Greenleaf T. Chase, and Gary Randorf of a pair of **(YELLOW) PALM**

WARBLERS on Spring Pond Bog, Franklin County, on 1 Jul. The birds occupied an area of stunted black spruce and tamarack muskeg habitat near a small pond on the 500-acre bog. Like neighboring Bay Pond Bog, where the first NYS nesting record of Palm Warbler was obtained in 1983, Spring Pond Bog is part of the projected 75,000 acre Boreal Heritage Preserve being formed by The Nature Conservancy. As recently as 1981, the Adirondack Park Agency held hearings on proposals to harvest mechanically the sphagnum layer from Spring Pond Bog for sale as a horticultural medium. Last year the Adirondack Conservancy purchased 5,886 acres – 3,065 acres in fee (including Spring Pond Bog) and 2,821 adjoining acres through conservation easement (including Bay Pond Bog) – for a total cost of over $360 thousand. This summer the Conservancy chose to pay a penalty of $22,937 to remove a large portion of the Preserve around Spring Pond Bog from Act 480A cutting provisions in order to save what remains of these boreal woodlands. Atlas observers recorded 130 species of breeding birds on the Preserve, including such rarities as Spruce Grouse and Palm Warbler.

On the Four Brothers Islands, a total of 12 Black-crowned Night-Herons, 1,000 Ring-billed Gulls, and 262 Herring Gulls were banded between 7-27 Jun. Two banded adult Ring-billed Gulls were found dead on Island C on 24 Jun; one had been banded as a chick on the same island 12 Jun 1983; the other was banded on Little Galloo Island, Lake Ontario, 7 Jul 1974, and was almost 12 years old when recovered. Only ten birds of nine species were banded near Elizabethtown 16-18 Aug, but a female Veery returned on 18 Aug that had been banded as an adult at the same station on 18 Aug 1981!

By late June a good white pine cone crop was forming across parts of the Region. Merry Baker reported the first Red Crossbills near Paradox 13 Jun, in song there by 15 Jul, and still singing 29 Aug, with several apparent family groups noted by late summer. In Franklin County, there was a pair at Osgood Pond 9 Aug and several also paired at Paul Smiths College during the rest of the month. Merry Baker also heard a White-winged Crossbill on Scofield Mt., Essex Co., 12 Aug. Evening Grosbeaks were travelling in large flocks by late July, with reports from Essex, Franklin, and Hamilton Counties of groups numbering up to 50 birds.

With perhaps fifty breeding species unreported, any assessment of the season would be incomplete. Project BirdWatch, which had a trial run in the Region this summer, may provide a fresh alternative to these seasonal reports, following the Atlas effort. The NYS office of National Audubon also proposes a systematic monitoring of the populations of selected native species, urging that the DEC join with other agencies to develop and standardize a compatible data information retrieval system, based upon an ecosystem approach – a proposal we applaud.

Contributors: Bartlett Bailey, Nick Bailey, Russ Bailey, Merry Baker, Thomas Barber, Timothy Barnett, Kevin Boyle, Geoffrey Carleton, Walter Chapman, Greenleaf T. Chase, John Copp, Robert Croso, Charlcie Delehanty, Katherine Eagleson, Emily Geddes, Robert Hagar, Anne Hungerford, Elsbeth Johnson, Gary Lee, Theodore Mack, Dorothy McIlroy, Robert McKinney, Ed McMahon, Shirley Meisburger, Edith Mitchell, Frank Morrison, Gale Motter, North American Rare Bird Alert (NARBA), Paul Novak, Bob & Pam Odear, John Parke, John Peterson, Gary Randorf, Walter Spofford, Tim Sterrett, Langdon Stevenson, Jan Treziak, William Weaver, Hollis White.

LOONS-DUCKS: Pied-billed Grebe: two Cedar R Jun (RM) only report. Double-crested Cormorant: max 600 Four Brothers Islands 22 Aug (LS), chicks still in nest 31 Aug. Canada Goose: 50 headed n Paradox 6 Jun. Wood Duck: max 12 Cedar R Jun. Ring-necked Duck: max 14 Saranac Lakes 12-14 Jul (RM). Com. Goldeneye: 4 arr Four Brothers 29-31 Aug. Hooded Mergansr: max 15 Cedar R Jun. Com. Merganser: max 85 Port Douglas 17 Aug (LS).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Bald Eagle: ad Cedar R Rd 2 Jun (GL), im Cedar R Jun (RM), im Tupper L 9-20 Jun (CD), ad Wickham Marsh 20 Jun (JC), singles Tupper L Jul (CD) and Boquet Aug (BB), healthy showing. Golden Eagle: sightings Hami, no nesting observed. Peregrine Falcon: three n Adirondack Jun (RM), nesting. Gray Partridge: Moira 4 Jun (RH, TM) only report. Wild Turkey: Bellmont and Elizabethtown, only reports. Yellowlegs (sp.): St. Regis R Aug (HW), only report. Upland Sandpiper: several Ft. Covington all summer, max three Champlain 25 Jul (PN). Sanderling: arr three Four Brothers Is "A" 29 Aug (RB, JP), one still present 31 Aug (TM, JP). Com. Snipe: max 20 beaver pond St. Regis Res. Aug (HE). Bonaparte's Gull: arr 30 Westport mid-Aug. Black Tern: Cedar R-Indian L area Jun (RM), only report.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: July reports from Cedar R, Champlain, Elizabethtown, Ft. Covington, Tupper L good showing. Barred Owl: only owl reported! Com. Nighthawk: Tupper L village July, only report. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: transient Four Brothers Is "D" 31 Aug (TM, JP). Three-toed Woodpecker: nested Ferd's Bog, pair w. Duck Hole in High Peaks 1 Jun (TB).

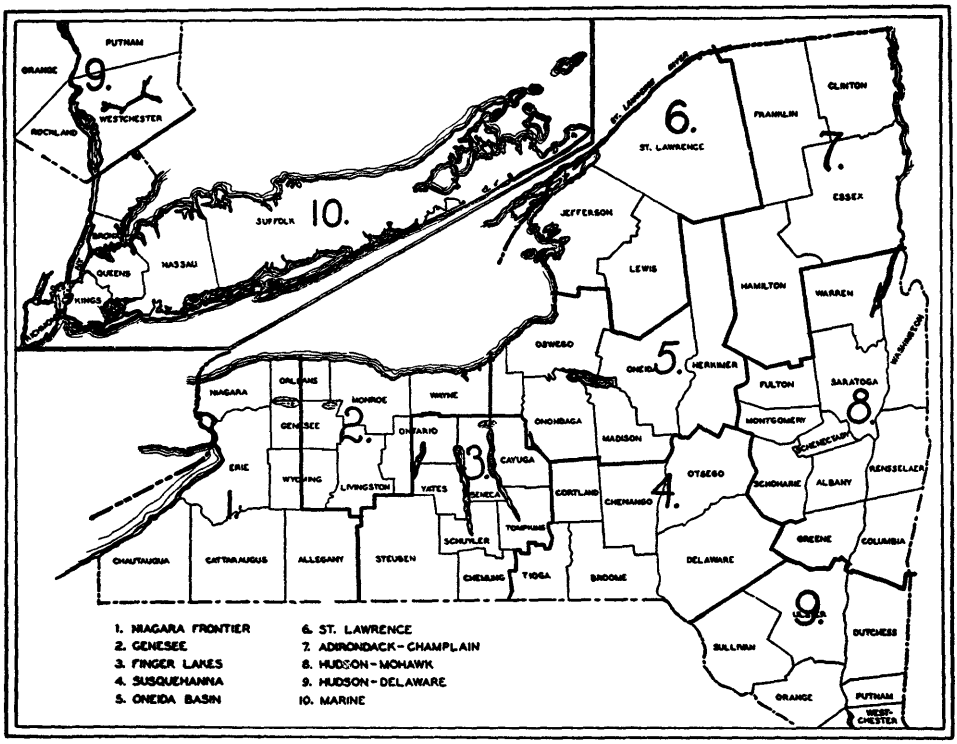
FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Gray Jay: max seven Sabattis Rd Bog 21 Jun (CD), incl. ad & four begging y in one group plus ad and one begging y on other side of bog. Blue Jay: begging y Tupper L 6-29 Jul, later than previous species. Am. Crow: max 12-16 Treadway Mt. cliffs 5 Aug (EG). Boreal Chickadee: 3 n Adks June, only report. Loggerhead Shrike; two pair Ft. Covington (2 y, 3 y), one Treambleau Pt Rd near Port Douglas 15 Aug.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Solitary Vireo: singing Paradox 18 Aug (MB). Red-eyed Vireo: singing Paul Smiths 31 Aug (TM). Golden-winged Warbler: Essex June-July (JPa), only report. Tennessee Warbler: singing males Owl Pate Bog, Esse, 26-27 Jun; Letsonville Rd, Paradox, 4 Jul (MB); Silver L Pres, Fran, 19 Jul (WC); migrant banded Elizabethtown 17 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: migrants Four Brothers Is "D" 31 Aug.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS White-throated Sparrow: transient Four Brothers Is "B" 31 Aug. Com. Grackle: max 100 Tupper L Marsh 27 Jul. Pine Siskin: flock over Paradox 18 Aug. Evening Grosbeak: 20 Indian L 14 Jul, five cracking cherry pits Tupper L 18 Jul, 11 Tupper L 19 Jul, max 50 Schroon L 22 Jul (MB), 20 Ft. Covington 23 Jul suggest late July movement, pair Westport feeder 2 Aug (EG).

Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

REPORTING REGIONS



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

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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
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