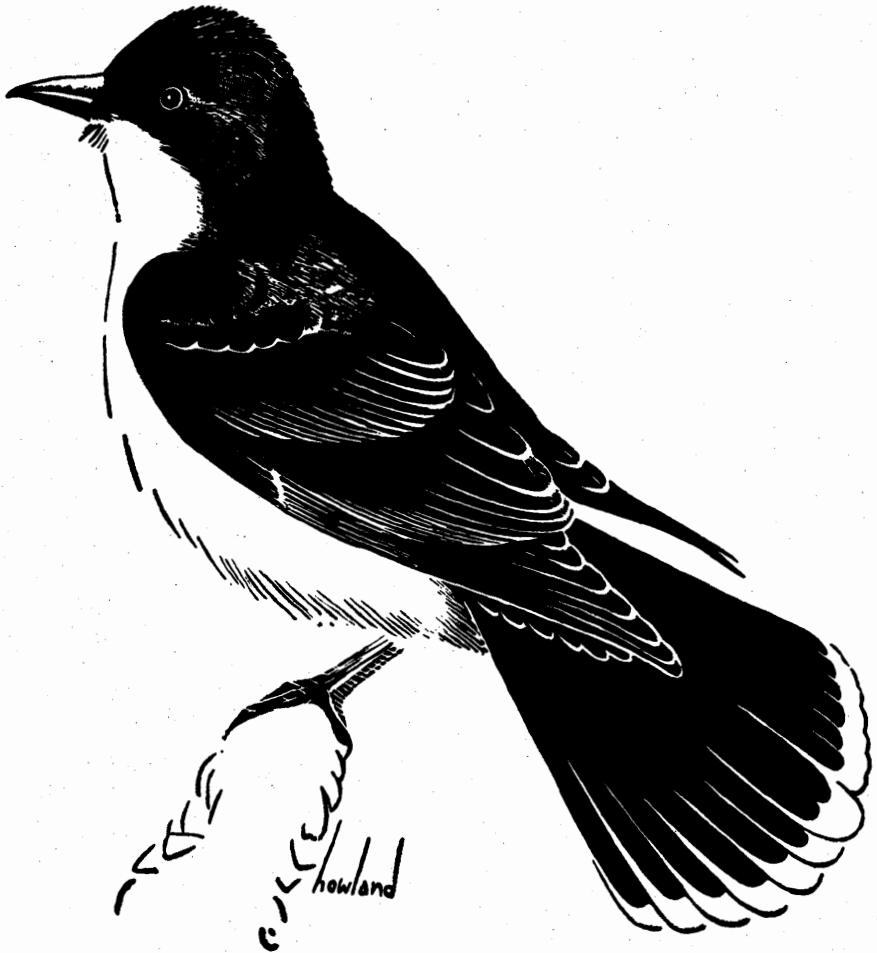


# The KINGBIRD



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# The KINGBIRD

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

Volume 50 No. 4

December 2000

pgs. 335 - 447

## CONTENTS

Early Nesting of Great Horned Owls in The Bronx, NYC Christopher Lyons.....	336
Little Stint ( <i>Calidris minuta</i> ) near Pike's Beach, Westhampton Dunes, Suffolk County, NY Rex G. Stanford.....	344
Cayenne Tern on Long Island, New York: North America's Fourth S.S. Mitra and P.A. Buckley.....	358
Poet's Corner Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr.....	368
New York State Federation Waterfowl Count, January 2000 Walton B. Sabin and Bryan L. Swift.....	369
Bibliography of New York State Ornithology for 1999 The Bibliography Committee, P. Jones, Chair.....	375
"To Market, To Market" ...to See a Life Bird Emanuel Levine.....	384
Concerning Amended Publication of "Gulls on the Niagara Frontier: An Update".....	387
Notes and Observations..... More on Swimming Herons Cassin's Sparrow at Jones Beach State Park, Nassau County	388
Highlights of the Summer Season Willie D'Anna.....	389
Regional Reports.....	393
Reporting Deadlines and Map of Reporting Region.....	447

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## EARLY NESTING OF GREAT HORNED OWLS IN THE BRONX, NYC

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On 27 Dec 1998, the day of the 1998 Bronx/Westchester CBC, I found the female of a pair of Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*) sitting in a large stick nest. Subsequent visits in the coming weeks found her continually in the nest, and three chicks were eventually fledged successfully. Although it is difficult to ascertain exactly when the eggs were laid, this is certainly a very early nesting date for the species in New York State.

### THE NEST

While scouting locations for the 1998 Bronx/Westchester Christmas Bird Count two weeks previous to the event, I found a pair of Great Horned Owls roosting in a small stand of white pines alongside the Van Cortlandt Golf Course. These pines are in a very narrow and strip of mainly deciduous woods between the golf course and the Mosholu Parkway Extension and is very difficult to access. I saw one owl first, and then heard it and another owl calling to each other. I could not locate the other bird, but the response calls seemed to be coming from a large stick nest in a nearby pine tree. The owl I first saw was smaller and darker than its mate, which I saw some days later, so it seems likely that it was the male, and his mate was in the nest. The nest was unusually large and sturdy, perhaps three feet across in diameter, and may well have been constructed by a Red-tailed Hawk, which are seen in the park year round, but to date have not been confirmed as breeding. Great Horned Owls in Van Cortlandt more commonly use crow or squirrel nests in their breeding attempts. I have observed several such attempts in the past eight years, some successful and some not.

The nest was wedged very securely at the top of the snapped off trunk of a white pine, roughly 60 feet off the ground, held in place by the boughs which radiate in all directions immediately beneath it.. The boughs over and around the nest offered both partial concealment and shelter from the elements. Other than the noise from the nearby highway on the east, and passing golfers on the west, it was clearly a desirable urban location for this species to breed, and I had observed a Great Horned apparently incubating in it two years previous to this. However, that attempt seemed to have been abandoned early on. Unlike other nests I have seen used by Great Horned, which nests generally fall to pieces dur-

ing or shortly after their use by the owls, this nest seems able to withstand the wear and tear of usage by these large birds, and is still in useable condition as of this writing (Nov 99).

On subsequent visits, I saw both birds roosting close together on the nest tree, but not in the nest itself. Two days before the count, I found them roosting together right over the nest. On the day of the count itself, 27 Dec 1998, the male was roosting in a nearby pine. After close study of the nest, which was deep enough for even the very large female to conceal herself, I was just barely able to see the telltale ear tufts sticking up. I did not see her out of the nest again until 31 Jan, when I saw her fly off at dusk.

## INCUBATION

Great Horned Owls are regular nesters in Van Cortlandt Park, and early nesting there seems to be the norm rather than the exception. The species normally nests early in the year, generally starting soonest in warmer climate zones. Late December is a common starting date in the Carolinas, but the earliest egg date recorded in New York State is 28 Jan (Bull 1974). Bent 1961, gives a range of egg dates from 18 Jan to 8 May for "New York and New England", without specifying further. In 1993, I and Leonard Abramson found a pair nesting on Vault Hill in Van Cortlandt Park, on 14 Jan. There was little doubt they had started before that date. This unsuccessful nesting attempt was reported in *The Kingbird* Vol 44(4), by David S. Künstler. All of the nesting attempts I have witnessed in Van Cortlandt have gotten underway before the early date 28 Jan noted above.

The exciting aspect of this nesting attempt for me was that I had never found an owl nesting site before incubation had actually begun. While the large crow population in the park is often helpful in locating owls, my experience is that the owls which breed successfully usually manage to avoid sustained harassment by corvids. For example, the owls on Vault Hill in 1993 showed distinct signs of agitation when harassed by crows, and the male in particular was easily frightened and inclined to fly off. The size difference between these two birds being considerable, we were able to determine that the male of this pair sometimes incubated, so this behavior of leaving the nest was probably most undesirable in terms of successful reproduction. Another factor in the nearly continuous and withering harassment this pair experienced was that they were using a crow nest in an important crow nesting area. The activity of the local crows helped us find the owl nest, but may also have played a role in the failure of that attempt. When faced with a determined and experienced pair of Great Horned Owls, crows seem ready to give up when their badgering fails to produce the desired effect. This is good for the owls, but makes finding their nests far trickier for curious humans, and that's a plus for the owls as well.

None of the breeding Great Horned pairs I have seen in Van Cortlandt have ever returned to the same spot to nest the next year, most likely because they would always destroy the nest they "borrowed" in the course of using it.

Once Great Horned females start to lay, they begin incubation immediately, and rarely if ever leave the nest until the chicks are several days old. Thus, while I could not be completely sure that this female had, in fact, laid her eggs on 27 Dec, I could at least be sure she had not started sitting in earnest more than two days before that time, though she clearly had her eye on this site for some weeks previous.

According to a study quoted by Johnsgard (1988), female Great Horned Owls rarely roost near the nest they select more than two weeks before they are ready to start laying. My own observations in Van Cortlandt, and those of the other birders I have spoken to, would tend to confirm this. Regrettably, I was unable to visit the nest as regularly as I would have wished. It was nearly impossible to see more than the female's ear tufts when viewing the nest from inside the woods or from the golf course--also, the golf course does not exactly welcome incursions by curious birders when the clientele is playing, even though it is located in a public park, so my observations were not as thorough or frequent as I would have wished.

On 31 Jan 1999, Yolanda Garcia and I were watching the nest at dusk, and saw the female fly from the nest shortly after sunset, joining her nearby mate. It was impossible to see whether or not the nest had any chicks in it. On 20 Feb, Leonard Abramson and I decided to take the slight risk of observing the nest tree from the edge of the Mosholu Parkway Extension. This afforded a much better view of the nest, since the highway is at the top of a slope rising east of the nest, and much more nearly level with it. When the female flew from the nest at sunset, we were able to see one small white fluffy chick pop up and look around. This was a very exciting moment, since we had no previous confirmation of young. The chick only had its head up briefly, and the depth of the nest made it impossible to be sure this was the sole occupant.

## NESTLINGS

Alex Pirko, another Van Cortlandt birder, told me he saw three chicks in the nest on 2 Mar 1999 while using the same highway observation point. On 13 Mar 1999, I used my spotting scope to confirm this report. Leonard Abramson, who has watched and photographed nesting Great Horned Owls in Van Cortlandt for many years, remembered only one previous instance, in 1989, of seeing so large a brood. Subsequent observations were done during the day, since the chicks were getting large enough to be seen when the female was still on the nest. The male would generally be standing guard in a nearby pine. I



never saw the male in the nest, though I have seen at least one male Great Horned apparently incubating , and that was during the unsuccessful attempt reported in *The Kingbird* article previously mentioned.

I will now make the wholly unscientific comment that there is nothing in the world more gentle than the eyes of a Great Horned female in a nest, surrounded by her growing young and much different from the expression she would have when, in her estimation, we were too close to said young. I made every attempt to keep my distance during this sensitive period, using my scope from the highway. The lovely views of the nest compensated for the frequent honking of motorists as they sped by.

## FLEDGING

It was reported to me on 26 Mar that one owlet had been found sitting on a rock some 100 feet north of the nest tree. The chick was approached closely, and the birders in question photographed it doing a threat display. On 27 Mar, two of the owlets were sitting on a limb above the nest, and a third, presumably the one found on the rock which obviously made the first trial flight, was perched on some vines about 20 feet off the ground, well north of the nest tree. We approached this chick closely on several occasions, taking care not to alarm it unduly. It observed us warily, but made no attempt to fly away.

By Good Friday, 2 Apr 1999, the young and both adults had left the stand of pines and were roosting in bare deciduous trees several hundred feet north of the nest. On 4 Apr 1999, all three chicks demonstrated the ability for sustained, although clumsy, flight while changing position in reaction to crow harassment and human presence. We continued to see them, with greater and greater difficulty, until early in May. At one point, the chick which had first left the nest was found far north of the other two, with the male keeping a close eye on it. We once observed what might be interpreted as distraction behavior by the male, when the owlet was being bothered by crows. The male flew off for no apparent reason, perhaps intentionally , drawing the crows' attention away from the youngster. The owl family continued to be found further and further north in the strip of woods, increasingly dispersed, until the spring foliage eventually made it impossible to relocate them. The parents were generally nearby, though the male disappeared towards the end of this period.

## OBSERVATIONS AROUND THE NEST TREE

Once the owl family had moved north of the nest tree, and the danger of disrupting their breeding cycle (or getting our scalps perforated) was no longer present, Leonard Abramson and myself investigated the area around the nest tree. We found numerous pellets, as well as the hind leg of a cottontail rabbit. Two



other birders reported finding the severed head of a crow. We collected a large number of pellets, and Clare Flemming, of the American Museum of Natural History's Mammalogy Dept., was kind enough to examine the skulls we extracted from them. She identified all of them as *Rattus norvegicus*, except for one which she thought might be a closely related species of rat. This jibes nicely with media reports of a major recent increase in New York City's rat population, and provides one possible explanation for the size of the brood the owls reared. I had found some fairly large carcasses near Great Horned Owl roosts in the past. I once found the half-eaten body of an adult raccoon beneath the roost of a particularly formidable looking female, myself staring somewhat awestruck at the talon punctures in its back, while she glared grandly down at me from above. As I mentioned, Great Horned Owls had been previously found roosting in the same part of the park where the subject pair had nested. During these previous winters, I had discovered the body of a Red-tailed Hawk near the roost, as well as the severed neck of a Canada Goose. In spite of all this circumstantial evidence, it is clear that the overwhelming bulk of the nesting owls' diet was composed of rats, in this case.

## DISCUSSION

If it can be safely concluded that the female had laid her eggs on or near 27 Dec 1998, this would certainly be one of the earliest, if not the earliest recorded nesting date for Great Horned Owl in New York State. The date is more typical of the southern states, and it seems likely that the increasingly temperate winters southern New York has experienced in recent years, combined with the noticeably warmer temperatures in the five boroughs, may be at least one cause of this phenomenon. Another might be the greatly increased food supply, due to NYC's aforementioned rat infestation. Some studies have indicated that an abundant food supply can lead to the female laying 3-4 weeks earlier than usual (Johnsgard 1988). The fact that the female flew off the nest on 31 Jan would correspond closely with the incubation period of 30-37 days (33 mean), (Houston, Smith, Rohner 1998). Female Great Horned Owls usually brood continuously until the chicks are several days old, at which time they may start leaving at night to seek food.

The sticking point here is that all the sources I have read say that Great Horned chicks begin to "branch" at around six weeks of age, often sooner. If the first chick hatched on, let's say 29 Jan, it should have started leaving the nest for surrounding branches on or around 12 Mar, instead of two weeks later. Eight weeks is a very late date for "branching", though the lack of constant observation during this period makes it possible that some brief sorties occurred days earlier, but probably not two weeks earlier.

Since no chick was seen before 20 Feb, and we didn't discover the highway vantage point until around that time, some doubt must remain as to when the female laid her eggs. Did the female exhibit abnormal behavior in terms of starting to sit continuously in the nest well before she was ready to lay? Did she lay her eggs and then delay incubation for over two weeks? Or was her leaving the nest at dusk on 31 Jan somehow not indicative, as we thought, that the eggs had hatched?

Or did the large size of the nest, and the potentially dangerous surroundings such as the busy highway on one side and active golf course on the other, encourage the chicks to remain where they were, and/or cause the parent owls to discourage "branching" until the chicks had reached a greater degree of maturation? There is little doubt that some atypical nesting behavior was at work here, and I can only regret that my schedule, combined with difficult viewing conditions, made more detailed observation impossible. Still, the latest possible egg date would be mid-January, and probably much earlier than that, based on the first date the female was observed within the nest.

When Bull listed 28 Jan as the earliest egg date, eastern Great Horned Owls were still considered to be mainly denizens of remote wilderness areas. As Salzman (1998) points out, this species was mistakenly believed to favor deep forest habitats, because those were the only habitats where they were not relentlessly shot and trapped as livestock killers. As persecution has diminished, they have moved into suburban and even urban habitats with equanimity, and have probably adapted their breeding behavior to take best advantage of these new environments. This provides further confirmation of the Great Horned Owl's reputation for resilience and adaptability, and offers new opportunity to those who would like to develop a more intimate knowledge of their behavior.

### POSTSCRIPT

On 12 Nov 1999, Alex Pirko e-mailed me a picture he had taken with his digital camera the previous day of a pair of Great Horned Owls he had found roosting 100-150 yards from the previous years' nest site. I have since visited the area several times and not seen any owls, and there is currently no sign of activity near the nest. Though I firmly believe that there are always Great Horned Owls somewhere in Van Cortlandt Park, I have located none in December of 1999. If there is a nest, I can't find it, and the crows are offering no clues. I hope that in the future I will have another opportunity to observe this and other breeding owl pairs, and add to the observations I have shared here.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all the people who helped in the observation of the nest site, particularly Leonard Abramson, Alex Pirko, and Yolanda Garcia, who also brought the skulls to the AMNH for analysis. Special thanks to Clare Flemming of the AMNH Mammalogy Department, for taking the time to look at the rodent skulls we found, and to Marie Winn for getting me in touch with her.

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**LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*)  
NEAR PIKE'S BEACH, WESTHAMPTON DUNES,  
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK**

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**ABSTRACT**

Some natural history of the Little Stint is provided, along with statistics on the rarity of this species and of Red-necked Stint (*C. ruficollis*) in North America and on difficulties of differentiating it from other small *Calidris* sandpipers. Some tips are provided on differentiating between juvenal-plumaged Semipalmated Sandpipers (*C. pusilla*) and Little Stints, illustrated by a photo of the former that portrays a commonly observed differentiating feature. A description is provided of the observation and photo-documentation of the alternate-plumaged Little Stint near Pike's Beach, Westhampton Dunes, Suffolk Co., NY on 16 Jul 2000, followed by detailed analysis of the relevant features revealed in five photos reproduced here in black- and -white, but originally in color.

**INTRODUCTION**

Little Stint is a common, small, arctic tundra breeding *Calidris* sandpiper that nests from northernmost Norway eastward to the delta of the Yana River in northern Siberia (Hayman, Marchant, & Prater, 1986; Rosair & Cottridge, 1995). The breeding territory is all substantially north of the Arctic Circle including, in the west, southern Novaya Zemlya and, in the east, the New Siberian Islands, both remote arctic outposts. Its southward migration is on a path west of that typically taken during its spring migration. This is especially, but not exclusively, true of juveniles (Veit & Jonsson, 1987). Although adults start southward in July, the juveniles do not begin that journey until near the end of August. Fall migration typically is not fully over until late in October. Wintering occurs over a wide area, including various locations around the Mediterranean, as well as sub-Saharan, eastern, and southern Africa, the Middle East, and eastward around the coast of India. In some winters small numbers may be found in southern Britain. See Hayman, Marchant, & Prater, 1986, for additional details of migration, including Map 193, Plate 76, p. 188. Although Little

Stint is a medium-to-long-range migrant and widespread winter resident on the eastern side of the Atlantic, it is a vagrant to both coasts of North America.

The prevailing winds across the Atlantic Ocean are west-to-east, and Pacific Ocean winds have the same predominant direction. Consequently, it should be less common for a Little Stint, many of which migrate through western Europe in the fall, to appear on our shores than it is for a Red-necked Stint, which migrates through eastern Asia at that time. Although it is likely that a few Little Stints from the easternmost populations of northern Siberia get sidetracked to the eastern coast of Siberia and then to this country via the Pacific, arriving initially in Alaska, this appears to happen infrequently. West Coast Little Stints compose only 37.5% of the accepted state records for Little Stint, whereas East Coast Little Stints compose 58.3%, based on my computation from data in Mlodinow & O'Brien, 1996. Thus, wind and geographic factors make for a scarcity of Little Stints, even while the same factors should make the Red-necked Stint somewhat more common.

The ratio of records accepted by state committees, nationwide, for Red-necked Stint (36) to the same kind of accepted records for Little Stint (24) is 1.5-to-1 (Mlodinow & O'Brien, 1996, Burke, 1998) with a tabulation window through November 1994.

The rarity of Little Stint in New York State is reflected in there being only two NYSARC records (Burke, 1998) One was a photographic record of an adult alternate-plumaged individual at East Pond, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge (JBWR), 17-22 Jul 1983 (TH Davis); the other, which did not involve a photograph, was of a juvenile, also on East Pond, JBWR, 2 Sep 1987 (Downing and Howell). Additionally, there was a report by a highly credible observer (PA Buckley) of an adult at West Pond, JBWR, on 5 Jun 1984, that was not reviewed by NYSARC.

### THE IDENTIFICATION CHALLENGE OF LITTLE STINTS

There may be something more than simple rarity that attracts avid shorebirders to the Little Stint or to stints in general. I suggest that persons who get deeply into shorebirding often are individuals who enjoy a good identification challenge. The similarities of the small *Calidris* sandpipers may play a role in creating this challenge, as may their distinctive seasonal changes in appearance. If the joy of a challenging identification problem is part of what drives ardent shorebirders, part of the attraction of the Little Stint may be the challenge of distinguishing it from Red-necked Stint, especially in juvenal and basic plumages, but, also in alternate plumage because of some differences across individuals within these species (see, e.g., Paulson, 1993) and because of changes related to molt and wear.

Correct identification of juvenal-plumaged Little Stint is difficult not only because of similarity to the juvenal-plumaged Red-necked Stint but because

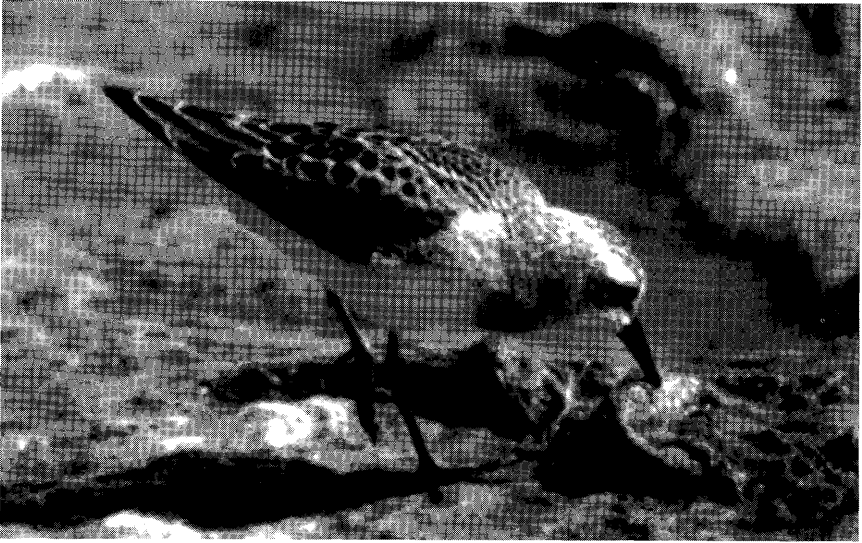


Photo A. This fresh juvenal-plumaged Semipalmated Sandpiper exhibits scapulars and a mantle that appear very scaly, a good characteristic for ruling out Little Stint.



Photo 1(5). The lifted left foot of the Little Stint shows the absence of webs between the toes, and additional Little Stint characteristics are shown, specifically, a finely tipped and spike-like bill, a pure white chin and throat, and a split supercilium.



Photo 2(6). The Little Stint appears above a Least Sandpiper. This display of its strikingly long legs, including tibia, helps rule out the squat and more short-legged Red-necked Stint.



Photo 3(8). The alternate-plumaged Little Stint shows very solidly dark centers in the lower scapulars and in many of the wing coverts, including in the greater coverts, with essentially no contrast between the darkness of those scapulars and the wing coverts.



Photo 4(10). The Little Stint (left) shows the characteristic facial pattern of breeding plumage, and in color, the bright rufous fringes of the upper scapulars and tertials are evident. The running *Calidrid* on the right, apparently a Semipalmated Sandpiper, provides a useful size comparison.



Photo 5(13). This reveals very solidly dark centers in both the scapulars and many of the wing coverts, and fine, dark, stippling in the necklace, which is thoroughly suffused with an orange wash in color prints.



that some fresh, juvenal-plumaged Semipalmated Sandpipers have very rufous backs and well may pass as Little Stints in that plumage unless one is able to spot their webbed feet (see Figure 6, Veit & Jonsson 1987 photo by P. A. Buckley). I obtained a series of excellent photos of such a rich, rufous Semipalmated Sandpiper on 7 Aug 1994, one replete with creamy mantle lines and split supercilium. Fortunately, I and other observers clearly saw the tell-tale webbing between the toes. What most of those photos show very clearly, though, and which all observers in this part of the world should look for before judging a juvenile to be a Little Stint, is a very scaly appearance, especially in the mantle, but also in the scapulars. If those areas look very scaly, the bird almost certainly is not a juvenal-plumaged Little Stint and well may be a Semipalmated Sandpiper in that plumage. Very scaly-appearing scapulars and, especially, mantle, are hallmarks of the Semipalmated Sandpiper juvenile (Veit & Jonsson, 1987, Plate 1d). The bird I photographed showed these features dramatically. See Photo A, taken with a 300mm lens, which shows these "scales". Both Little and Red-necked stints, but, perhaps, especially, the Little Stint, should, in juvenal plumage, have a mantle that appears more streaked than scaly (see Veit & Jonsson, 1987, Figure 13). Careful observation is suggested, though, because these scales may be less evident when the bird is viewed from a considerable distance or from certain angles, as my own photos (not reproduced here) of the aforementioned Semipalmated Sandpiper suggest, or when the bird's plumage has become worn.

### **OBSERVATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE LITTLE STINT ON 16 JUL 2000**

Westhampton Dunes is a recently naturally created, and now strongly developed, narrow barrier island on the South Shore of Long Island at the east end of Moriches Bay. The area of Westhampton Dunes where I photographed and at least nine others simultaneously witnessed the Little Stint on Sunday, 16 Jul 2000, between early afternoon and 4:00 PM, was a beach area east-southeast of Swan Island (DeLorme, 1998, p. 27), a short distance west of what locals call "Pike's Beach," a somewhat sickle-shaped sandbar on the north shore of the barrier beach.

What had drawn me to that area was the hope of finding Red-necked Stint, not Little Stint. Until I arrived on site on 16 July and talked with other birders, I was unaware that a few other birders had, since the day before, been reporting actual or possible Little Stint in the area (see ACKNOWLEDGMENTS). I had come there in the hope of seeing and photographing the brilliant alternate-plumaged Red-necked Stint that had been discovered around 10:00 AM, Wednesday, 12 Jul, by John Fritz, had been seen by others in the interim, and had been captured on video by Angus Wilson on a drizzly, rainy Saturday,

15 Jul. Because Wilson had put some of those Red-necked Stint video shots on his web site that very day and immediately had alerted the birding community, via the internet, of that fact, I accessed his enticing images late that same evening. My wife, Birgit, and I decided to go out the next morning to try to observe and photograph this rare and stunning bird. By early afternoon on 16 Jul, as low tide approached, we and at least eight others were on the bayside beach that lies perhaps a quarter of a mile west of Pike's Beach.

Early in our vigil a basic-plumaged Wilson's Phalarope appeared, an auspicious start, if not exactly what we were seeking. Shortly thereafter, someone noticed an odd, small, brightly colored, *Calidris* sandpiper, one whose energetic exploration for food made it a challenge to relocate if one lost sight of it momentarily among the other shorebirds. There ensued good group cooperation to enable everyone to see and stay on this very active, almost frenetically moving, bird. It helped that this *Calidrid*, which turned out to be the Little Stint, had the exceptionally long legs characteristic of the species, giving it, at times, a "walking-on-stilts" appearance that made it stand out a bit among the other small peeps (see Photo 6). In the location where the puzzling *Calidrid* was first seen, the Wilson's Phalarope, standing exceptionally tall and pale, sometimes served as a useful reference point for those trying to relocate it. A very good bird on most days around here, the phalarope had suddenly become a mere sign post. Such can be the fate of an upstaged bird.

It was immediately obvious that this puzzling, rufous-topped, peep was not the Red-necked Stint found earlier in the week by John Fritz. This mystery bird, although having extensive rufous color on its face, head, nape, mantle, scapulars, and tertials, lacked even a trace of that color on either the chin or the throat, whereas in the Red-necked Stint, the throat and even the chin (excepting a very narrow, lighter area at the bill base) were rich with brilliant rufous. Persons quickly started noting the absence of webs as this strange, long-legged *Calidrid* strode rapidly about the drier portions of the sandy beach, energetically pecking and probing for food. Sanderling was conclusively ruled out by this bird's small size, barely larger than a Least Sandpiper, and by the presence of a hind toe, among other discordant features. Clearly, due to the absence of webs, combined with other details, the mystery *Calidrid* was a stint! But which?

There were a number of other shorebird species in the general area, and they increased in numbers of individuals and species as low tide (1:32 PM at Moriches Inlet) approached. The most abundant in the area near the stint undoubtedly were Least and Semipalmated sandpipers, and they had the most frequent interactions with the stint because they tended to feed in the same seaweed and horseshoe crab shell littered areas as the stint, the Least more frequently than the Semipalmated. The stint threatened, chased, and even flew at these species if they came close to its feeding area. It proved, all afternoon, that it was a bold and feisty bird, one neither intimidated by other peeps nor by the sometimes low overflights of airplanes and a helicopter. Once, the stint remained

steadfast to its feeding area even when a close overflight by an aircraft had put up most of the other shorebirds.

Additional *Calidris* species seen that afternoon by me or by others were Red Knot, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, and Pectoral Sandpiper with the Sanderlings tending to show retained breeding plumage. The incoming of one of the latter occasionally would, at very first glimpse, arouse a false hope that the Red-necked Stint had reappeared, but no one was fooled for longer than about the time it takes a Sanderling to run its own length. The Red-necked Stint was not seen by our group prior to my leaving near 4:00PM, but it was reported, by at least one individual, to have appeared there later in the day.

The burning issue before us on that afternoon was, though, not so much "Where is the brilliant breeding-plumaged Red-necked Stint?" as "Is this a Red-necked Stint or a Little Stint?" Identifying a problematic shorebird species usually should begin with a decision on its plumage stage or age, given that the appearance of a particular species can vary remarkably, depending on its plumage stage and degree of wear and molt within a given stage. It seemed obvious that this was an alternate-plumaged adult stint because it had, on the head and breast, the brilliant, rich, rufous coloration of stint breeding plumage. A juvenile of either the Red-necked or the Little Stint species would not have had this brilliant coloration on the head, and, if a juvenile were possible this far south at this extremely early date, it would have had the most pristine of crisp edges or borders on the scapulars and coverts and no signs of molt. This bird had good, clear, very rufous fringes on the very dark-centered scapulars and clear, light-colored (sometimes rufous) fringes on very dark-centered wing coverts, but some of the wing coverts showed signs of wear and/or molt. Other features of the bird will be discussed under "What the Photos Showed," but, clearly, this was a contest between alternate-plumaged Red-necked and alternate-plumaged Little Stint. Its colorful tertial fringes favored the latter.

The absence of even a visible trace of rufous on the throat might have been seen as a clear indication of Little Stint, but there was need for caution. Molt can, especially in a late-summer bird, make the throat of a Red-necked Stint look white (usually, though, with just a hint of rufous). This bird seemed too early for this kind of appearance, if it were a Red-necked Stint. However it was possible that movement in this energetically feeding bird had made it difficult to glimpse remnant traces of rufous. In such a case, photos of the throat area, which could be carefully examined at leisure, would be useful.

A clear, white throat might have been a factor in some birders' erroneously identifying a Red-necked Stint, present at Cedar Beach, Suffolk Co., New York, in August, 1992, as a Little Stint, the error later being demonstrated through analyses of photos. Also, my own photos of that same Cedar Beach, 1992 individual showed a facial pattern somewhat resembling the present bird, whereas other features clearly showed that bird to be a Red-necked Stint. The

resemblance of both the facial pattern and the throat pattern of the present bird to that late August Red-necked Stint were sources of reservation, from my perspective, about calling this a Little Stint. This, of course, was mid-July, but occasionally a bird will molt a bit early.

It was evident in the field that the scapulars, including the lower scapulars, and many of the wing coverts, especially the greater coverts, were very solidly dark centered, and these factors favored Little Stint. Nonetheless, some of the coverts just appeared a warm, grayish brown, especially along the front, lower margin of the folded wing. From my perspective in the field, this was not reassuring for a quick call of this as Little Stint. On the other hand, this grayness in some of the small coverts might have been the effect of wear on what originally were lighter fringes or might have been due to molt (or, conceivably, simply retained coverts from the preceding winter). Some alternate-plumaged Red-necked Stints do have a few dark-centered coverts, but they typically are (Veit & Jonsson, 1987, p. 231) otherwise unmistakable. The bird was constantly on the move, and this made difficult any detailed inspection of the patterns within individual small coverts. Photos would be useful for inspecting the details of both scapulars and coverts. I, therefore, tried, with considerable success, to get some pictures that would focus clearly on these features. Later inspection of these photos showed that even some of the smaller coverts had dark centers. I had found those markings difficult to discern, with certainty, in the field.

It also was evident in the field that although this bird had rich rufous on the fringes of its dark-centered scapulars, its wing-covert fringes, although sometimes showing rufous, did not seem as brightly colored as I had expected in Little Stint. I had previously observed only one Little Stint (Cape May, NJ, 13 Jul 1999), but had done so for over an hour. My recollection of its wing covert fringes —backed up, in some degree, by my very distant photos— is that they were somewhat brighter than those on this bird, so this was another source of some personal reluctance to immediately label this as "Little Stint", despite some clearly concordant features. I subsequently have learned that there are substantial individual differences among Little Stints, even in breeding plumage, in the brightness of their covert fringes and, in particular, that females tend to be less bright, generally, than males (Mullarney, Svensson, Zetterström, and Grant, 1999).

As hours passed, the group that had gathered there began slowly to dwindle in size, but those of us who remained continued to preoccupy ourselves with trying to definitively identify this bird and with making field notes. Having assigned myself the task of trying to get photos that would disclose the identity of this stint, I focused on getting pictures of critical details that were proving difficult to pin down by visual observation. Birds may be the "stars" of our photo albums when we are able to image a rare one, but they neither know nor care anything about this notoriety. The very moment we think we have the scope focused

on a critical, identification relevant detail, the bird too often manages to make it disappear before it can be given adequate visual analysis. If, on the other hand, a photo can be taken in the interim, such details later can be examined at leisure.

The following was an example of this: An important feature that differentiates the Red-necked and the Little Stint is that the latter, but not the former, shows an upper breast finely stippled with dark brownish spots that tend to organize themselves, to our visual sense, as being fine streaks. Very importantly, this stippling is thoroughly suffused on the Little Stint, with a pale rufous or orange wash. This is not observed in the Red-necked Stint, whose more intensely reddish throat color at most barely crosses or touches the boundary of the relatively coarse, dark brown, rather arrowhead-shaped markings at the sides of the breast (and that sometimes continue, thinly, across the upper breast). Despite many tries, it proved very difficult to see precisely how the wash of color on the necklace of this stint lay in relation to the dark-brown stippling, which clearly extended, as a nearly parallel-edged band, across its breast.

Finally, near the end of my period of observation and photography, the stint obligingly put its head down, with its body angled toward a 10:00 AM position, turned its head toward its right, and began to probe into the sand with its bill. In so doing, it squarely exposed to my view, through my scope, the underside of its upper breast, clearly displaying the dark-brown, stippled streaks thoroughly and completely suffused with the rufous wash! The bird allowed two photos in this general attitude before it extracted its bill from the sand.

## **THE PHOTOS AND WHAT THEY SHOW**

Photos Copyright © 2000 Rex Stanford

The five photos of the Little Stint -Photos 1(5), 2(6), 3(8) 4(10) and 5(13), of necessity are depicted in black-and -white in this journal. Readers with access to the internet may wish to see these photos in color and enlarged with the corresponding numbers in parentheses being those at:

*<http://www.best.com/~petrel/NYLSST.html>*

Readers also may wish to compare and contrast this on-line alternate-plumaged Little Stint with the alternate-plumaged Red-necked Stint photographed by Angus Wilson the previous day (15 Jul 2000) in the same general area. The latter may be viewed at:

*<http://www.best.com/~petrel/RNS.NY.html>*

These sets of photos are cross-linked at Angus Wilson's web site, "Ocean Wanderers,".

Photos 1(5) and 5(13) were taken through a Nikon Fieldscope ED78 with a 30x eyepiece, and Photos 2(6), 3(8), and 4(10), through a 45° offset (angled) Swarovski spotting scope with 80mm objective lens and a 20-60x zoom

eyepiece. To photograph through these scopes, a hand-held 35mm SLR camera (Canon EOS Elan II E with attached Canon Lens EF, 50mm, 1:1.8 II lens set at infinity) was used with automatic exposure and some center-field weighting. The latter works well for centered targets with a high-luminosity background, as was typical here.

**Photo 1(5) shows:** (a) no webbing on the Little Stint's raised left foot, which, considered along with other characteristics, makes this either a Little Stint or a Red-necked Stint; (b) a typical Little Stint spike-like, finely tipped and finely based, bill; (c) a clean, pure white chin and throat, which are characteristic of Little Stint, but not Red-necked Stint in alternate plumage; (d) a broad "necklace" in which the fine, dark-brown stippling is coextensive with a rufous or orange wash (although the color cannot be seen in this photo); this is compatible with Little Stint, but not Red-necked Stint; and (e) a split supercilium, which may be compatible with either Red-necked or Little Stint; and (f) no real lightness-darkness contrast between the scapulars and wing coverts, which is strongly suggestive of Little Stint.

**Photo2(6) shows:** the Little Stint immediately above a Least Sandpiper whose alternate plumage is considerably worn and, perhaps, reveals some molt. In black -and-white, this photo mainly illustrates the remarkably long legs of the Little Stint, the tibia (upper legs) being especially long, a characteristic of Little Stint and not compatible with Red-necked Stint, which is relatively squat and has short legs. This photo also shows the split supercilium and the spike-like bill. In color it shows rich rufous on the darker areas of the head, the rufous being particularly bright over the ear coverts (auriculars) and on the scapulars near the front of the bird's folded wing. In color it also shows bright rufous fringing the tertials, a characteristic very unlikely to occur in this degree in the Red-necked Stint. In color it also can be seen that the back of the neck is an orange wash, a color that extends onto the sides of the neck.

**Photo 3(8) shows:** (a) the dark centers of many of the wing coverts, as well as of the scapulars, whose fringes are still clear and appear relatively unworn; (b) related to this, a lack of real contrast in the darkness of the scapulars and the coverts; (c) a necklace effect on the breast that is made up of fine brownish stippling, and, very importantly, that is thoroughly suffused with an orange wash (when seen in color); (d) the pure white color of both the chin and throat, without the slightest trace of reddish color, despite the rich color on the head (and elsewhere); (e) the relatively narrow character of the bill, although the tip is here, again, inserted into the substrate; (f) the primaries as extending slightly past the tail tip, despite the posture of the bird, which tends to pull the wings forward; and (g) the stint's legs as extremely dark (black in the color prints). Items (a) - (d), especially in combination, speak clearly for the identity being Little Stint, not Red-necked Stint.

**Photo 4(10) shows:** as a color print, that the bird on the left (Little

Stint) has tertials with brilliant rufous fringes, a characteristic not at all typical of breeding-plumaged Red-necked Stint but very typical of alternate-plumaged Little Stint. In black-and-white, this photo is mainly useful for a size comparison between the Little Stint and what appears to be a Semipalmated Sandpiper, at right, running from right to left.

**Photo 5(13) shows:** (a) when viewed in color, that the orange wash actually is within the necklace (on the breast), the necklace itself being composed of fine brownish stippling that gives the appearance of light streaks (L. Jonsson, 1993, p. 223, summer Little Stint in July; contrast with the same area on Red-necked Stint, p. 225); (b) a clean, pure white throat, not just chin, albeit in shadow, in this case; and (c) a general lack of contrast of the scapulars and the coverts, due to very dark centers in the lower scapulars and most of the coverts, including greater coverts; (d) reasonably dark centers in the tertials; and (e) when seen in color, rufous in some covert fringes. Combined, items (a) - (e), as well as items mentioned relative to other photos, speak conclusively in favor of Little Stint.

## CONCLUSIONS

The stint shown in the pictures in this paper is an adult Little Stint in alternate (breeding) plumage. The photos, especially as viewed in color, amply demonstrate that identity. They show, once again, that photography can be invaluable in resolving ambiguities about identity and in unequivocally documenting the occurrence of a particular species.

Having a camera to photograph believed rarities should never be deemed to obviate the need for careful, dedicated, field study, the more so in the case of peeps and other difficult categories of birds. This caveat should be unnecessary for observers who enjoy spending many hours in the field observing and studying form, features, and behavior, including changes in appearance and, even, behavior with the passage of time. Although these dedicated, thoughtful observers may never twitch—or even wish to twitch—their way to the very highest list numbers in the nation, they likely will contribute especially reliably and usefully to knowledge of the avian world, precisely because they are making the effort really to see and to know what they encounter.

Being thoroughly conversant with common species, these individuals will recognize a rarity with relative ease, even when this distinction is difficult, and they will know which of its features differentiate it from those species. Consequently, if they are able to photograph such a rarity, they will know which of its features are the most important to capture in the interest of documentation. Dedicated field work and photo-documentation work well together, for reasons that extend beyond an increased likelihood of encountering rarities in the field.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very grateful to Andrew Baldelli and to a donor who prefers anonymity, for the loan of their spotting scopes for photographing the Little Stint. I thank my wife, Birgit, for proofing and making copy-editing suggestions on more than one draft of this paper. I thank Angus Wilson for getting very qualified outside reviewers to examine, via the internet, a selection of my photos to be sure that Little Stint was the species photographed and, also, for his scanning and cropping of my photos and making them available on his web site . I join numerous other birders grateful to him for getting pictures, despite adverse weather conditions, of the alternate-plumaged, Pike's Beach Red-necked Stint, and for putting them on his web site and notifying the birding community of that fact, via the internet, the very same day. I am grateful also to Tony Lauro whose kind offer to ferry birders from Cupsogue County Park to the stint area near Pike's Beach strongly enhanced my readiness to go there on 16 Jul given that I otherwise dreaded the fatigue of an extended walk carrying heavy equipment the day prior to a long trip for which I barely had begun preparations. That the local constabulary decided, unexpectedly, to permit parking in the stint area on 16 Jul is beside the point. Neither I nor anyone else knew about that on 15 Jul when Lauro made birders the welcome offer that helped me make my decision to go the next day in search of the Red-necked Stint. Last, but not least, I join numerous birders grateful to John Fritz for finding the Red-necked Stint on Wednesday, 12 July 2000, and for ensuring, with the help of Tony Lauro, that a substantial number of birders knew of that find that very day. This began the flow of stint seekers to the Pike's Beach area, which resulted in additional birders seeing the Red-necked Stint, the Little Stint, or, in some cases, both. Appropriately, Fritz was among the few privileged to observe both stints. Evidently, Eric Salzman was the first person to state without equivocation that he had found a Little Stint in the Pike's Beach area, on 15 Jul.

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## CAYENNE TERN ON LI, NY: NORTH AMERICA'S FOURTH

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### ABSTRACT

An adult, basic-plumaged Cayenne Tern in the Westhampton Beach area of Suffolk Co., Long Island, NY, on 17-18 Jul 2000 was not only the first for NY, but just the fourth for North America—and the first away from the Outer Banks of NC.

Its complete description, and a discussion of Cayenne Tern's identification, distribution, and taxonomy—especially its complex relationship with Sandwich Tern—are presented.

### INTRODUCTION

On 17 Jul 2000, an adult Cayenne Tern, *Sterna (sandvicensis) eurygnatha*, was identified 4.5 km (3 mi) east of Moriches Inlet, Suffolk Co., L.I., NY, along that portion of the south shore of Moriches Bay known as Pike's Beach. It was discovered independently by three parties during the afternoon and evening of 17 Jul: SSM, accompanied by Peggy and Joel Horman, arrived in Westhampton Dunes at 1200h and found the tern around 1400h; Gerta and John Fritz arrived in the area around 1600h and found the tern a short time later; Hugh McGuinness arrived around 1615h while the Fritzes were still present, but found it from a different vantage point. This bird, which remained long enough to be observed at the same location by PAB, Fritzes, SSM, T.H. Burke and others the following day, represents the first *eurygnatha* from New York State, and only the fourth ever in North America (Buckley and Buckley 1984; Davis 1995a, b; AOU 1998).

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## DISCOVERY AND DESCRIPTION

SSM and party were looking for the adult Red-necked and Little stints (*Calidris ruficollis* and *C. minuta*) that had been found at this location a few days before. By 1400h, they had reached the north end of a large spit that had been favored by the Red-necked Stint, examined, without success, the flats emerging on this spit's western side, and started walking back to check newly exposed flats to the west. As SSM gave the western side of the spit a final scan, he was stunned to discover a medium-sized, yellow-billed, crested tern resting on a narrow sandbar just beginning to emerge to the north and west of the large spit. He immediately drew the Hormans' attention to it, and over the next 20-30 minutes, they studied it closely at rest and in flight, through binoculars and a 32X scope, from distances as close as 50m. One other birder, Eric Salzman, was visible to the observers at this time, and his attention was also called to the tern. The following details were noted, explicitly discussed by all observers, and recorded by SSM a short time later.

Clearly an adult 'crested tern', it was in basic plumage, rapid loss of alternate plumage, sometimes even before egg-laying, being typical of crested terns. Direct comparison revealed it was roughly 10-15% larger than adjacent Common Terns (*S. hirundo*)—and thus clearly smaller than a typical Royal Tern (*S. maxima*) but close in size to a Sandwich Tern (*S. sandvicensis*). The upperparts were very pale gray, the forehead and crown white, the nape and crest black, and a narrow black mask extended from behind the eye around the back of the head. The crest was obvious, but not as strikingly long as in Elegant Tern (*S. elegans*). The bill appeared very long, much slimmer than that of Royal Tern, seemed to droop toward the tip, and its overall color was a cold greenish-yellow, devoid of any orange or red tones. The basal fifth and the distal third of the bill were purely this color, as were the top of the culmen, both cutting edges, and the lower edge of the lower mandible. In between these areas, i.e., in the middle portions of each mandible, were several blackish-gray marks. These marks were not very extensive and were most obvious when the bill was in full profile, but in some views, they were barely discernible. SSM felt that the impression of a droop to the bill was largely a result of the curvature of the culmen, and that the lower edge of the lower mandible was essentially straight; Joel Horman thought that the lower mandible drooped slightly as well. All agreed there was no obvious gonydeal angle. The folded primaries on the standing bird looked blackish and contrasted with the pale gray tertials and mantle. In flight, the dark outer primaries showed as a blackish rectangle on the upper surface of each hand, contrasting dramatically with the almost whitish remainder of the upperparts. There were no dark markings whatsoever on the tail, mantle, scapulars, tertials, secondaries, or wing coverts (i.e., no carpal or secondary bars), nor was there any

other evidence of immaturity. The underwing was pale except for a dark trailing edge to the outer primaries. The unbanded legs and feet were black.

This party left the tern resting on the bar at about 1430h. As they proceeded to the west, they encountered several observers who had located and were watching the Red-necked Stint. As SSM, the Hormans, and Salzman paused to study the stint, they related the presence of the unusual crested tern farther to the east. SSM later learned that these persons (Joe DiCostanzo and companions) had subsequently seen the tern briefly before it disappeared from the bar.

Gerta and John Fritz found the Cayenne Tern independently ca. 1600h on a mudflat several hundred meters west of the site of its initial discovery. They studied the bird at length, recorded all of the features enumerated above, and exposed several rather distant photos. These photos, although unsuitable for publication, nevertheless show several important fieldmarks and are preserved in SSM's files.

### SUBSEQUENT OBSERVATIONS

News of the discovery spread quickly that evening. SSM telephoned PAB—one of very few people he knew to have seen multiple Cayenne Terns in life—and A.J. Lauro of the New York City RBA. John Fritz and SSM spoke by telephone around 2000h, finally learning of each other's observations. Later, McGuinness posted a message regarding the tern on his electronic newsletter, East End Report.

By 1100h the following morning, 18 Jul, as the tide began to fall, a dozen observers had converged on Pike's Beach. PAB was the first to relocate the Cayenne Tern, which was resting on the western shore of the large spit described above. Francine G. Buckley was the first to notice that a typical adult basic-plumaged Sandwich Tern—with an aluminum band on its right leg—was also present. The opportunities for direct comparison with a Sandwich Tern in the same telescope field, and for contrast with an adult basic-plumaged Royal Tern seen earlier that morning, were especially helpful in confirming the Cayenne's identification. All of the points noted in the previous day's description were reaffirmed at this time.

It is curious that in initial impressions, virtually all observers felt that the Cayenne's bill seemed larger and heavier than a Sandwich's, whereas these differences largely vanished under direct comparison with the latter species. Observers who never saw the Cayenne alongside the Sandwich had difficulty believing that the former's bill was, in fact, very similar in size and shape to that of a typical Sandwich Tern. The Cayenne was slightly larger overall than the Sandwich (but well within the range of sexual size variation in Sandwich), and

several observers—even after acknowledging the illusion described above—still felt that the Cayenne's bill was slightly deeper-based, showed somewhat more curvature to the culmen, and gave a more drooping impression than that of the Sandwich. At rest and in flight, another subtle distinction was noted between the two: the dark patch on the upper surface of the outer primaries was larger and bolder in the Cayenne than in the Sandwich, and it contrasted more strongly with the rest of the upperparts. The upperparts of both birds were very pale, and observers could not discern striking contrast between the white tail/rump and the pale gray mantle on either bird. Observers on the 18th agreed that the apparent extent of the dark elements on the bill varied with angle, lighting, and distance, appearing least extensive under the best and closest viewing conditions.

Eventually, the Cayenne Tern flew southeast, passed over the observers, and disappeared from sight over the ocean; fifteen minutes later, the Sandwich Tern left. By the time the observers had departed the large spit, the Cayenne Tern had returned and was bathing in the shallow water over the same sandbar, just now emerging, where it had been discovered the previous day. The Cayenne Tern was seen sporadically on this bar, in flight, and on another bar several hundred meters to the west, by several different parties, at least through 1600h. All efforts to find it after 1800h and on subsequent days were unsuccessful, but the Sandwich Tern remained in the area through 23 Jul (NYC RBA). At no point did the Cayenne and Sandwich Terns interact socially, and apart from the few minutes immediately following the initial observation on 18 Jul, they were never seen together.

## IDENTIFICATION

This Cayenne Tern was distinguishable from other taxa of crested terns by virtue of its smallish size eliminating-Royal (*maxima*) and Greater Crested (*bergii*)-and plain yellow bill-eliminating Elegant (*elegans*), Lesser Crested (*bengalensis*), and the nearly extinct Chinese Crested Tern (*bernsteini*). It was also distinguishable from all of these but *bengalensis* by differences in bill structure, from several races of *bergii* and *bengalensis* by its paler mantle, from *bengalensis* also by its white rump and tail, and from *elegans* also by its shorter crest (Malling Olsen and Larsson 1995).

It was of course separable from Sandwich Terns (*sandvicensis/acuflavida*) by its almost wholly yellow bill. The limited blackish markings on its bill fell well within the limits of variation described for populations of *eurygnatha* throughout the taxon's boreal range and thus do not necessarily represent evidence of any typical Sandwich Tern ancestry (see following discussion). The darker and more extensive blackish surfaces on the outer primaries, relative to the Sandwich Tern with which it was observed, reflect greater relative wear of these feathers. Such a difference likely mirrors timing of molt in the two indi-



**Figure 1.** A breeding colony of Cayenne Terns on Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, date unknown; photo courtesy of Roland DeKorte and the Society of Caribbean Ornithology.

viduals, such as would be expected in boreal summer breeders from different latitudes (assuming the Sandwich to have most likely come from NC and the Cayenne from the Caribbean). Fig. 1 shows a colony of Cayenne Terns on Bonaire; the centrally dusky bill on the adult in the middle is a near-perfect match for the LI bird's.

### **DISTRIBUTION AND TAXONOMY OF CAYENNE TERN**

Just what is a "Cayenne Tern"? In theory, it is a yellow-billed, Sandwich-like tern endemic to the southern Caribbean, with another, allopatric population along the coast of South America from Brazil to Patagonia. In practice, it's more complicated, and as species Cayenne and Sandwich have been both lumped (most current thinking) and split.

Sandwich Terns with yellow-nibbed, black bills breed locally in the Western Hemisphere from coastal Virginia south to Florida and west to south Texas; off the Yucatan Peninsula and Belize; at scattered sites in the Bahamas,

off Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico; and in the US and British Virgin Islands (Shealer 1999, Norton 2000). Black-billed breeders from the United States, Mexico, and the West Indies are usually treated as a distinct subspecies (*acuflyvida*) on the basis of their slightly smaller size and shorter bills relative to nearly identical nominate *sandvicensis* from the western Palearctic (Malling Olsen and Larsson 1995).

The center of abundance for boreal-summer breeding Cayenne Terns is on islands off the northern coast of South America. The largest colonies are on Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire, Isla Margarita (Venezuela), and Battures de Malmanoury (French Guiana: Tostain et al. 1992), but it also breeds in small numbers elsewhere in the Caribbean between Trinidad and the Puerto Rican Bank (Norton 2000). Another, austral-summer breeding Cayenne Tern population occurs from eastern Brazil south to Patagonia, with postbreeders wandering northward but not beyond Brazil. To date, only one banded Sandwich Tern has ever been recovered south of the 'Guianas'—in Rio Grande del Norte, Brazil, ca. 6° S, where additional nonbreeders have also been reported (Sick 1993). No austral breeders have been proven to occur north of Brazil, and yellow-nibbed, black-billed individuals are apparently unknown as breeders in the austral population. Thus there is no evidence that the two Cayenne Tern populations exchange breeders or genes.

But in the southern Caribbean, especially on the islands of Curaçao and Bonaire, the situation is complex. There, one finds what appears to be an interbreeding population of yellow-billed Cayennes, black-billed Sandwiches, and various 'intermediates.' The situation was described in detail by Junge and Voous (1955), Voous (1957), Ansingh et al. (1960), and Voous (1968), with an accessible summary in Voous (1983). For example, in one eight-year study in the Netherland Antilles, the largest proportion of birds were yellow-billed (38-84%); the next most frequent group had yellow bills with 'some' black (11-36%); and Sandwich-like bills were found in 6-26% of the colonies. In addition, a handful ('present' or ~1%) of individuals with 'red' bills were detected each year (Voous 1983). The big question, still unresolved, is whether the Sandwich-like birds were genetically 'Sandwich' Terns that were hybridizing with Cayennes and producing all of the 'intermediate' bill types, or whether they were Sandwich-like variants within a single highly variable taxon known as Cayenne Tern. This question will only be answered by molecular analyses, so far lacking.

Until the early to mid 1960s, neither Sandwich nor Cayenne terns were known to breed further north in the West Indies than the southern edge of the Caribbean (Buckley and Buckley 1984), but since then distributions of both have apparently expanded considerably. Norton (2000) estimated the West Indian Cayenne breeding population at between 10-100 pairs, and that of Sandwich on the order of 2100-3000 pairs. Recently, apparent Sandwich and Cayenne terns have been found breeding together in small numbers on islands on the Puerto

Rican Bank (Culebra, Pelican Cay [USVI], and Anegada [BVI]). The problem there, as in the Netherlands Antilles, is definition of *eurygnatha*, as various 'intermediate' bill states ranging from yellow patches on otherwise Sandwich-like bills ('a small fraction' of breeders), to yellow bills with dusky markings have been found (Norton, pers. comm.). On the Puerto Rican Bank, Sandwich-like birds mated to Cayenne-like birds have been considered hybrid pairings, and all locally breeding terns with intermediate bill colors have been considered the product of hybridization (Shealer 1999, Norton 2000). Perhaps so, perhaps not.

Currently, the American Ornithologists' Union (1998) regards *eurygnatha* as a subspecies of *S. sandvicensis*, as do Malling Olsen and Larsson (1995). In contrast, Harrison (1983, 1987) accords species status to *eurygnatha*, but alludes to a lack of definite information regarding variation and hybridization in colonies along the Venezuelan coast. Nearly all books have paid scant attention to the widespread austral population. Malling Olsen and Larsson (1995) describe *eurygnatha* as follows: "As Sandwich Tern *acuflavida*, but bill yellow, varying from orange to straw-yellow, often with darker central areas." They also regard phenotypically intermediate individuals, with the basal two-thirds or more of the bill black (thus approaching the condition in *acuflavida*), as referable to *eurygnatha*.

Published photographs of 'Cayenne Terns' in Harrison (1987: numbers 637 and 638) and in Malling Olsen and Larsson (1995: numbers 57-59 and 71) show considerable variation in bill color and structure, even within the same flock. Major bill color-states (not discrete, but variable) include black with a yellow tip, black with yellow blotches, greenish-yellow with black blotches, orange-yellow with black blotches, pure greenish-yellow, and pure orange (red). Similarly, bill structure varies from as slender as *acuflavida* to almost as heavy as *maxima*, and from essentially straight to conspicuously drooping, but none of this variation has been critically dissected by sex, age, or latitude/breeding area.

Although the photos in Malling Olsen and Larsson (1995) only depict breeders from the Netherlands Antilles, Buckley and Buckley (1984) assembled evidence documenting variation in bill coloration within populations of *eurygnatha* from essentially all portions of the taxon's known range, including the larger-billed, longer-winged, austral-summer breeding populations in Brazil (Sick and Leão 1965), Uruguay (Escalante 1970), and Argentina (Voous 1968). Birds in all of these populations showed yellowish bills with varying amounts of dark blotching. In view of the great distance from the nearest colonies of *acuflavida*, the lack of exchange of banded individuals, the contrast in breeding seasons (austral vs. boreal summers), and the suite of structural differences between the austral populations and typical *acuflavida*, this variation cannot reasonably be attributed to introgression of genes for *acuflavida*-like bill color. Thus, it appears that most if not all populations of *eurygnatha* display highly variable bill coloration, but one that is most typically dull yellow.



In contrast, such variation is completely unknown among populations of nominate *sandvicensis* in the Old World. In the Western Hemisphere, there is actually little published evidence confirming the occurrence of yellowish bill patches among populations of undoubted *acuflavida*. Away from the zone of presumed contact with *eurygnatha* in the Netherlands Antilles/Puerto Rican Bank area, the only Sandwich Terns showing patches of light/yellow color on black bills have been reported from Cape Hatteras in 1983 (incubating adults with traces of yellow on mandibular rami: Buckley and Buckley 1984), and it is unknown if these represent hybrids or ancestral variation. There is also an undocumented claim in Shealer (1999) that occasional adult Sandwiches in 'more northern populations' may show some yellow along the gape, and that some juveniles may show yellow on the bill. The latter condition, at least, is not at all uncommon, so *eurygnatha* introgression need not be invoked; e.g., see Fig. 1 on Plate 13 in Malling Olsen and Larsson (1995: 56).

To date, the only North American occurrences of typical, yellow-billed Cayenne Terns are: alternate-plumaged adult at Cape Point, Cape Hatteras, NC, 30 May 1983, having a bill color "somewhere between 'lemon' and 'banana' yellow" with "a suggestion of duskiness on both mandibular rami" (Buckley and Buckley 1984); basic-plumaged adult photographed in the same location, 23 September 1994 (Davis 1995a); basic-plumaged adult with an "entirely cold, yellow bill" (P. Lehman and B. Patteson, pers. comm.) on a radio tower off Oregon Inlet, NC, 31 July 1995 (Davis 1995b); and the LI adult reported here.

## CONCLUSION

The discovery of a Cayenne Tern on Long Island was perhaps not unexpected, given the taxon's northward expansion from its southern Caribbean base around the early 1960s, its current toehold breeding population on the Puerto Rican Bank, and the two additional NC records since the first in 1983. Whether Cayenne Terns represent a cohesive, albeit extraordinarily variable, biological species (perhaps occasionally hybridizing with Sandwich Terns at range edges), or whether their variably colored bills are indicative of widespread, systematic hybridization with and introgression from Sandwich Terns, it is likely that more will occur in North America. Regrettably, the attention accorded this taxon appears to be at least partly a function of whether or not the A.O.U. treats it as a valid biological species, hence one that is 'countable.' Nevertheless, the occurrence of an individual on Long Island was a provocative educational experience for many, and we encourage observers to document any future records of Cayenne Terns in North America. We thank John Fritz, Joel Horman, and Pat Lindsay for reviewing the manuscript, and Ricky Davis, Paul Lehman, Hugh McGuinness, Rob Norton, and Brian Patteson for information of various sorts.

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### **THERMALLING**

On Whitehorse Mountain  
among goldenrods humming bees  
oaks rustling choruses of September  
I dwell on kettling hawks

This is Broad-wing day  
Hundreds of Broad-wings tiering up  
from the north ridge  
smoke signals of the Iroquois

High above, the wing tip of one  
pirouetting under another's primaries  
For a moment-mobiles  
Sliding off they are curves  
under hawks circling  
under arcs of more raptors  
all ascending and sweeping downridge  
motions of earth and planets around the sun

Maxwell Corydon Wheat, Jr.

## **NEW YORK STATE FEDERATION WATERFOWL COUNT JANUARY 2000**

**Walton B. Sabin**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs' annual midwinter waterfowl count (FWC) was held 15-23 Jan 2000 with the target date being 16 Jan. The entire state was covered by approximately 280 observers, with all Regions completing their counts in the allotted time.

Of the 44 species counted, 23 exceeded 1,000 individuals, and nine exceeded 10,000 each. Those top nine species, in order of abundance, were: Canada Goose, Mallard, Greater Scaup, American Black Duck, Common Goldeneye, Redhead, Canvasback, Brant and Common Merganser. Of the nine, three species showed >10% decreases and two showed >10% increases since 1999. The grand total of 382,516 individuals was up 3.0 percent from 1999, and 45.1 percent above the 27-year (1973-1999) average of 263,480.

### **THE WEATHER**

January 2000 began with two weeks of above normal temperatures across the state, with high temperatures in the 40s and 50s through 12 Jan. Cold weather hit with a vengeance on the 13th, with temperatures during the count period generally below freezing, including several days with highs in the single digits. The one mild day was the target date of 16 Jan with highs in the 30s and 40s. As result of this weather pattern, many small inland waters were frozen, whereas larger lakes and coastal bays remained open to waterfowl use. Snowfall during January was meager except in the usual snow belt areas downwind of Lakes Erie and Ontario through the middle of the count period, when considerable amounts fell in most areas around 20 Jan.

## THE COUNT

The grand total of 382,516 (Table 1) was up 3.0 percent from 1999, and 45.1 percent above the 27-year (1973-1999) average of 263,480. Counts of all species listed in Table 2 showed losses versus gains over 1999 to be 16 to 5.

Comparing 2000 to 1999 FWC figures (Table 2), the top ten species showed a 7 to 3 split in favor of decreases. Canada Goose(+51%) and Common Merganser(+26%) showed large increases, while Brant (-60%), and scaup (both species,-36%), Long-tailed Duck(-44%), and Ruddy Duck(-42%) showed large declines.

When comparing 2000 FWC figures with the 27-year (1973-1999) average (Table 3), there is a 9 to 4 split in favor of decreases. The overall total in Table 3 shows a large percentage increase over the long-term average with Canada Goose contributing hugely to this. It is encouraging that Common Merganser numbers have shown an increase over 1999, while on the other hand, it was not encouraging that scaup numbers have decreased.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service midwinter waterfowl inventory report (Serie and Raftovich 2000) showed total waterfowl numbers in the Atlantic Flyway (Maine to Florida) down 11.9% from 1999, but 5.9% above the 10-year (1990-1999) average. Flyway counts indicated substantial declines from 1999 for many species, including Canada Goose (-16%), Mute Swan (-17%) Am. Black Duck (-18%), Mallard (-17%), Canvasback (-15%), scoters (-23%), Long-tailed Duck (-60%), Common Goldeneye (-26%), mergansers (-27%) and Ruddy Duck (-17%), whereas Snow Goose (+24%), Redhead (+17%), Ring-necked Duck (+53%), and Bufflehead (+19%) increased substantially. However, most of these species were within  $\pm 15\%$  of their 10-year averages, except Snow Goose (+70%). Canada Goose (+20%) scaup (-28%), scoters (-64%), Bufflehead (+33%), and Ruddy Duck (+70%). Concern about declines in scaup and sea duck populations have resulted in more restrictive bag limits for hunters in recent years.

## FUTURE OF THE WINTER FWC COUNT

The FWC will be more important than ever in the coming years. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) plans to terminate their aerial survey of waterfowl wintering in New York State, after comparing results of the two surveys and concluding that the FWC provided comparable (and for some species, better) data for monitoring long-term population trends (Swift and Hess 1999).

NYSDEC will rely on the Federation count as its standard survey, and they have already become actively involved in compiling and reporting the annual data. It is essential now that member clubs and individuals maintain complete and consistent coverage of areas that they have surveyed in the past to ensure that results are comparable from year-to-year and over the long-term.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank all of the approximately 280 observers who participated this year. A special thanks to the Regional Compilers who coordinated all those volunteers. Regional Compilers were:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Compiler</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Compiler</u>
1	William Burch	6	Lee Chamberlaine
2	Gregory Hartenstein	7	John Peterson
3	Eric Donohue	8	Bryan Swift
4	Leslie Bemont	9	Michael Usai
5	Marge Rusk	10	Stephen Dempsey

## NEXT YEAR

The 2001 Federation Waterfowl Count (FWC ) dates are from 13 through 21 Jan, with Sunday, 14 Jan, as the target date.

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Table 1. Regional totals for January 2000 waterfowl count.

Species/Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Loon, Red-throated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	246	270
Common	0	0	5	0	4	1	0	0	5	249	264
Grebe, Pied-billed	8	4	34	0	2	0	0	0	16	113	177
Horned	0	7	21	0	0	0	4	0	8	142	182
Red-necked	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Cormorant, D.-crested	41	1	1	0	8	0	0	0	0	159	210
Great	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	43	169	214
Goose, Snow	0	0	120	0	0	0	606	10	1	200	937
Canada	4,169	4,603	33,765	4,281	11,830	4,971	3,708	34,721	15,004	45,948	163,000
Brant	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,682	10,687
Swan, Mute	0	110	1	1	2	0	2	117	287	1,186	1,706
Trumpeter	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Tundra	139	4	139	0	0	8	0	0	0	4	294
Wood Duck	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	9	13	31
Gadwall	47	31	81	0	14	10	0	0	34	1,208	1,425
Wigeon, Eurasian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
American	35	6	25	1	3	0	1	0	154	1,442	1,667
Am. Black Duck	122	838	1,234	201	193	289	478	722	1,246	12,584	17,907
Mallard	6,897	8,941	6,999	1,779	3,235	1,029	2,774	1,872	3,645	12,343	49,514
Mallard X Black	0	5	0	1	0	0	2	0	12	41	61
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Shoveler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	520	538
Northern Pintail	0	0	4	0	4	1	0	0	9	264	282
Green-winged Teal	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	10	597	614



Canvasback	7,420	48	659	1	0	0	0	1,000	780	1,506	11,414
Redhead	445	5,125	6,095	0	87	300	0	0	1	35	12,088
Ring-necked Duck	25	41	176	1	127	0	8	3	345	489	1,215
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scaup, Greater	11,965	1,111	160	0	1,906	2,764	75	0	4,849	6,976	29,806
Lesser	61	166	541	0	30	0	3	0	1,285	671	2,757
scaup species	0	1	91	0	0	16	300	1	0	88	497
Eider, King	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	411	412
Harlequin Duck	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	10
Scoter, Surf	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,034	4,036
White-winged	1,591	87	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,456	8,136
Black	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	371	373
scoter species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,121	1,121
Long-tailed Duck	3,021	827	4	0	17	383	0	0	33	3,014	7,299
Bufflehead	833	176	315	0	98	132	106	0	875	6,045	8,580
Goldeneye, Common	2,065	4,838	1,820	12	1,103	2,044	1,311	401	187	1,763	15,544
Barrow's	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Merganser, Hooded	29	37	22	10	26	6	47	41	261	1,333	1,812
Common	4,034	1,349	249	159	747	326	1,553	588	1,414	69	10,488
Red-breasted	264	59	17	0	31	5	3	1	187	4,554	5,121
Ruddy Duck	2	2	2	0	6	0	0	0	1,143	3,999	5,154
American Coot	89	532	1,342	60	27	0	4	0	423	1,226	3,703
Unidentified	299	24	30	0	0	290	0	0	2,304	16	2,963
<b>TOTAL OF ABOVE</b>	<b>43,607</b>	<b>28,988</b>	<b>53,962</b>	<b>6,508</b>	<b>19,502</b>	<b>12,575</b>	<b>10,985</b>	<b>39,477</b>	<b>34,613</b>	<b>132,299</b>	<b>382,516</b>

**Table 2.** Comparison of 2000 count with 1999 count for all species totaling over 1,000 individuals in 1999 or 2000, or both.

Species	1999	2000	% Change from 1999
Snow Goose	1,544	937	-39.3
Canada Goose	108,029	163,000	50.9
Brant	26,700	10,687	-60.0
Mute Swan	1,871	1,706	-8.8
Gadwall	1,842	1,425	-22.6
American Wigeon	1,867	1,667	-10.7
American Black Duck	20,176	17,907	-11.2
Mallard	47,872	49,514	3.4
Canvasback	11,960	11,414	-4.6
Redhead	12,768	12,088	-0.5
Ring-necked Duck	1,407	1,215	-13.6
scaup (both species)	51,695	33,060	-36.0
scoter (all species)	13,951	13,666	-2.0
Long-tailed Duck	13,071	7,299	-44.2
Bufflehead	9,371	8,580	-8.4
goldeneye (both species)	15,890	15,545	-2.2
Hooded Merganser	1,446	1,812	25.3
Common Merganser	8,338	10,488	25.8
Red-breasted Merganser	5,030	5,121	1.8
Ruddy Duck	8,834	5,154	-41.7
American Coot	3,779	3,703	-2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>367,441</b>	<b>375,988</b>	<b>2.3</b>

**Table 3.** Comparison of 2000 count with 1973-1999 average for all species consistently totaling over 1,000 individuals annually.

Species	Average	2000	% Change
Canada Goose	64,192	163,000	253.93
Brant	15,305	10,687	-30.2
American Black Duck	19,899	17,907	-10.0
Mallard	31,715	49,514	56.1
Canvasback	10,744	11,414	6.2
Redhead	7,543	12,088	60.3
scaup (both species)	50,146	33,060	-34.1
scoter (all species)	12,551	13,666	8.9
Long-tailed Duck	4,426	7,299	64.9
Bufflehead	6,004	8,580	42.9
Common Goldeneye	12,247	15,544	26.9
Common Merganser	11,441	10,488	-8.3
Red-breasted Merganser	3,774	5,121	35.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>249,986</b>	<b>358,360</b>	<b>43.4</b>

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Please send any additions or corrections to the above bibliography to: Phyllis R. Jones, Sullivan County Community College, Loch Sheldrake, NY 12759, jonespr@sullivan.suny.edu



## "TO MARKET, TO MARKET"...TO SEE A LIFE BIRD!

By Emanuel Levine

585 Mead Terrace, South Hempstead, NY 11550

In the process of writing a history of The Linnaean Society of New York, historian Gil Schrank found in their archives, a handwritten list entitled "Birds Noted in Washington & Fulton Markets During Winter of 1871-1872 (133 Species)". The list was compiled by Harold Herrick, a noted ornithologist of that era and one of the founders of The Linnaean Society.

The list is reproduced below. Unless the name of the bird is followed by a quantitative comment, the species was considered to be "common" and was noted as such.

Where there might be some confusion as to what species is being referred to, I have taken the liberty of inserting the current English name in parentheses, and in one case, the Latin name.

Snowy Owl	Killdeer
Gt. Horned Owl	Golden Plover
Barred Owl	Bk Bellied Plover
Long Eared Owl	Piping Plover
Short Eared Owl	Ring Neck Plover (Semipalmated Plover)
Mottled Owl (Screech Owl)	Knot
Bald Eagle	Pectoral Sandpiper
Red Tail Hawk	Red Back Sandpiper (Dunlin)
Red Shoulder Hawk	Purple Sandpiper
Sparrow Hawk (Am. Kestrel)	Spotted Sandpiper
Pigeon Hawk (Merlin)	Solitary Sandpiper
Sharpshin Hawk	Least Sandpiper
Cooper Hawk	Semipalmated Sandpiper
Marsh Hawk	Buff Breasted Sandpiper
Fish Hawk	Sanderling
Rough Leg Hawk - Uncommon-one only	Great Yellowlegs
Long Bill Curlew	Little Yellowlegs
Short Bill Curlew (Whimbrel)	Willet
Esquimaux Curlew	
Field Plover (Upland Sandpiper)	

Dowitch  
 Turnstone  
 Oyster Catcher -Uncommon  
 Wilson Phalarope-Uncommon  
 Clapper Rail  
 King Rail  
 Sora  
  
 Va (Virginia Rail)  
 Yellow Rail -uncommon  
 Coot  
 Canada Goose  
 Snow Goose  
 Brant Goose  
 Whitefront Goose  
 Black Duck  
 Mallard Duck  
 Gadwall Duck  
 Widgeon Duck  
 Pin Tail Duck  
 Long Tail (Oldsquaw)  
 Golden Eye Duck  
 Buffle Head Duck  
 Harlequin -hardly ever  
 Ruddy Duck  
 Big Scaup  
 Little Scaup  
 Ring Neck  
 Eider (Common Eider)  
 Velvet (White-winged Scoter)  
 Surf  
 Scoter (Black Scoter)  
 Shoveler  
 Canvas Back  
 Red Head  
 Wood  
 Bl Wing Teal  
 GreenWing Teal  
 Hooded Merganser  
 Buff Breast Merganser (Common  
 Merganser)

Red Breast Merganser  
 Pied Bill Grebe  
 Red Throated Diver (young)  
 Loon  
 Common Cormorant -several  
 Herring Gull  
 Hairy Woodpecker  
 Downy Woodpecker  
 Yellow Bellied Woodpecker  
 Golden Wing Woodpecker (No.  
 Flicker)  
 Pileated Woodpecker  
 Red Head Woodpecker -Uncommon  
 Red Bellied Woodpecker "  
 Bk Bill Cuckoo  
 Brown Thrush (Brown Thrasher)  
 Wilson's Thrush (Veery)  
 Blue Bird  
 Robin  
 Kingfisher  
 Cedar Bird  
 Snow Bunting  
 Sky Lark  
 Lapland Longspur - Uncommon  
 Meadowlark  
 Blue Jay  
 Song Sparrow  
 Red Wing- Rusty-  
 Cow & Crow Bk Birds  
 Bobolink  
 Carolina Dove (Mourning Dove)  
 Wild Pigeon (Passenger Pigeon)  
 Raven - Rare-once or twice  
 Wild Turkey  
 Quail  
 Ruffed Grouse  
 Pinnated Grouse (Heath Hen)  
 Spruce Grouse  
 Sharp Tail Grouse  
 W. Ptarmigan  
 G + No Shrike (both Loggerhead and  
 Northern)

Whooping Crane - one or two  
Gt. Blue Heron  
Night Heron  
Green Heron  
Bittern  
Glossy Ibis -two or three  
Woodcock  
English Snipe (Common Snipe)  
Marbled Godwit - not rare  
Hudson Godwit - not rare  
Bk back Gull  
Bonaparte's Gull  
Wilson's Tern (Common Tern)

13 Species noted prior to 1871 by others  
(no quantitative information given)

Golden Eagle  
Goshawk  
Broadwing Hawk  
Jer Falcon (Gyr Falcon)  
Pine Grosbeak  
Sage Cock  
Little Auk (Dovekie)  
Caspian Tern  
Labrador Duck  
English Teal ( Eurasian Teal)  
English Widgeon (Eurasian Wigeon)  
English Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)  
Curlew Sandpiper

You will note that several of the species listed are now extinct , namely Esquimaux Curlew ,Wild Pigeon, Pinnated Grouse, and Labrador Duck. Of course market gunning played major roles in their demise.

Presumably these birds were being offered in the market as food. Considering the diet of some of these species , one must wonder how they could made palatable. I remember reading somewhere the recipe for cooking scoters. You place the scoter in a pot of water along with a brick. You bring it to a slow boil and allow it to boil for three days. You then throw the scoter away and eat the brick !

**CONCERNING ENCLOSED AMENDED PUBLICATION OF  
"GULLS ON THE NIAGARA FRONTIER:AN UPDATE"**

An amended publication of Willie D'Anna's article, "Gull's On The Niagara Frontier: An Update" the original of which appeared in *Kingbird* 50(3):206-222 is enclosed with the current issue, reason being the omission of a cogent line of text and most of the bibliography.

The author is also taking this opportunity to make four changes he suggested originally, but were not made due to an error on the editor's part. In other words, Murphy's Law (everything that could go wrong, did!) was in full operation here.

The changes, listed below, are incorporated in the amended publication text and are shown here for convenience.

Pg. 206: under "SPECIES LIST"

"The status of the four most common species has not changed since 1977."

This should read, "The four most common species have not changed since 1977."

Pg. 207:

"Mew, California, Slaty-backed and Ross's gulls are new additions since 1977 and remarkably these three species were discovered by gull enthusiasts from Michigan, Rod and Marlene Planck, in a period of less than one week in 1992!"

This should read, "Mew, California, Slaty-backed and Ross's gulls are new additions since 1977 and remarkably the first three of these species were discovered by gull enthusiasts from Michigan, Rod and Marlene Planck, in a period of less than one week in 1992!"

Pg. 212: under "California Gull"

"There is one sighting away from the Niagara R., a second-winter bird found 22 Dec 1998 by Robert Sundell in Jamestown (pers.comm.)."

The correct year is 1996, not 1998.

Pg.213: under "Iceland Gull"

"Although individuals showing the characters of the nominate subspecies are occasionally reported, as yet there are no accepted records other than *kumlieni*."

This should read: "Although individuals showing the characters of the nominate subspecies are occasionally reported, the only proven form is *kumlieni*."

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

### MORE ON SWIMMING HERONS

In *Kingbird* Vol 50 (1) :17, I posed the question "Have You Ever Seen a Heron Swim??", and described an encounter with a swimming Yellow-crowned Night-Heron.

I have since heard from three readers. Norman Stotz advises that some years ago on a trip to the Everglades, he observed several Black-crowned Night-Herons engaged in swimming activity.

Bob McKinney says, "I have seen it happen a few times. I believe the most notable was perhaps some 20 years ago when a group of Great Blue Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons would fly from perches in a wooded area along the Lake Ontario shore just west of Braddock Bay and land in the lake perhaps a quarter mile from shore where they would catch fish. They then would return to their perches on shore to consume their catch. This went on for over half an hour. It may have ended when the fish they were catching had dispersed."

Mike Peterson refers me to *Kingbird* Vol 45(4):315 where I find, "A young Great Blue Heron swimming in deep waters off Island 'D' 14 Jul was able to lift off the water, when forced to land on the lake again by dive-bombing Herring Gull, the heron swam in and sedately walked ashore." Mike advises that at the time they referred to this individual as the 'Great Champlainian Grebe'!

It is amazing what a welter of behavior items not found in the standard literature, is contained in the experience of active birders. Why not share them with us? That's what this "Notes and Observations" section is for.

### CASSIN'S SPARROW AT JONES BEACH STATE PARK, NASSAU COUNTY

A mystery sparrow was seen late in the day 6 Oct 2000 by Tom Burke and Gail Benson at the western end of Parking Lot Six, Jones Beach State Park, Nassau County. Burke could only tentatively narrow the identification down to the genus *Aimophila* that evening, but after researching the field marks on the bird observed, returned the next morning, relocated the individual and identified it as a Cassin's Sparrow, a species whose normal range in the United States is Arizona, Texas and New Mexico. The birding community was immediately alerted and over the next few days, dozens of birders came to share the sighting and most were successful. The sparrow was last seen on 11 Oct.

If accepted by NYSARC, this will bring the official NYS checklist to 457 species.

Interestingly, species number 455, Black-tailed Gull, was discovered about 300 feet due east in the same parking lot.

A full account will appear in Vol 51(1), specifically the next *Kingbird*.

The Editor



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON 2000

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### WEATHER EFFECTS

The wet spring continued into June in most Regions, with temperatures near normal. July was also wet in Regions 6 through 10 but more notably, it was much cooler than average throughout the state. It was the third coolest July ever at Buffalo, the second coolest at Rochester, the coolest ever at Syracuse, and the tenth coolest at Albany. This made for more pleasant field conditions as multitudes of birders explored the state in the first year of Atlas 2000. The trick, of course, was in trying to stay dry. August weather varied more across the state than the other months. In Region 10 it was three degrees warmer than average but in Region 8 it was over four degrees cooler. In most Regions the temperature and precipitation were near their long-term averages. The fall passerine migration, which can be substantial in late August, was barely noticeable this season.

### ATLAS 2000

The second statewide effort to document the breeding birds of New York State got into full swing this season. Atlas 2000 had been eagerly anticipated by many but perhaps no more so than by the birders who worked on the first Atlas. They already knew about the joys of exploring new areas, learning (or relearning) the songs of our breeders, intimately studying nesting activities, and, of course, making a surprising discovery or two. Region 1's Mike Morgante put it best, "...the project is very rewarding, albeit difficult in some cases, and is a great learning experience for beginner and expert birder alike."

Most of the following information is from birders working on Atlas 2000. Least Bitterns were found in six blocks including a nest with young in Region 1 found by DEC personnel. Despite being a common species, it is rare to find an unfledged juvenile Turkey Vulture, as happened in Region 5. Finding their nest is even more of a challenge. For the sixth straight year, Trumpeter Swans bred at Perch River WMA in Region 6, raising four young. Redheads are rare breeders in the state. Three broods at Iroquois NWR in Region 1 are doubtless the result of releases in recent years. I would suspect that is also the reason for six broods in Region 6, where recent breeding has not been noted.

Mainly positive remarks were made for Osprey, Bald Eagle, Peregrine

Falcon, and Merlin but the news was not all rosy. Wet weather may have contributed to a poor year for Bald Eagle in Region 7. Osprey returned to Region 2 after last year's first nesting there in a century. After their initial Region 8 nesting last year, Merlin did not return to the same site but may have found a new spot in the Region. It was heartening that the Upland Sandpiper, threatened in New York, was found in all ten Regions.

Without the Atlas getting birders into the field, it is hard to imagine that Long-eared Owls would be found in three Regions, as they were this season. Acadian Flycatcher was deemed to be coming back after the first Atlas was completed. Reports from Regions 1 and 3 seem to indicate that they may still be increasing. Barn Swallows nested on a ferry that crossed into three different Atlas blocks – to learn which block got the "CO" read the Region 5 report. Again, probably due to the extra effort of atlasers, Sedge Wrens were found in five Regions. This is a tough species to confirm and no confirmations were reported this season. In the category of most ambitious I would nominate the Golden-crowned Kinglet feeding a Brown-headed Cowbird in Region 5.

Pine Warblers have been suggested previously as increasing in Region 1. This season, Regions 1, 2 & 5 noted the same trend. Found in five Regions, Clay-colored Sparrow apparently has increased as a breeder since the first Atlas. The threatened Henslow's Sparrow was still found in good numbers in its Region 6 stronghold along with more than usual in Region 3 and a new colony outside of Buffalo in Region 1. While this is certainly good news, the latter location is an area of rapid development and highlights the fragile status of the species in western New York, especially with the knowledge that they have already been extirpated as breeders in adjacent Ontario.

### RARE BREEDERS

With the first breeding season of Atlas 2000 essentially completed, it is interesting and exciting to look back upon the numerous rare breeders turned up this year. The state's first inland nesting of Great Egret occurred in 1995 in Region 1, where the species continues. The second inland site was discovered this year in Region 7. At the same Region 1 rookery with the Great Egrets, three Snowy Egrets lingered for over a month but showed no stronger evidence of breeding. A fledgling Red-breasted Merganser in Region 6 would represent one of very few confirmed breedings, if correct. It needs to be remembered, however, that juveniles of Common Merganser are very similar to that species. Despite increasing in New York, Great Black-backed Gull has not shown a great desire to breed here. Thus, nesting in Region 7 this season is noteworthy. Adult Short-eared Owls feeding young in Region 5 is, unfortunately, a much rarer sight than formerly for this endangered species in New York. Still, it was a first for Region 5. A pair of Ruby-crowned Kinglets in July in Region 9 was most intriguing but further evidence of breeding was not obtained. Two Palm Warblers in late June

in Region 8 were likely not migrants and thus, were a major surprise. Dickcissels were confirmed breeding in Region 1. This very rare breeder in the state was not recorded during the first Atlas. Fledgling Pine Siskins were found in Regions 8 & 9, confirmed breeding according to the Atlas criteria. White-winged Crossbills feeding young in Region 7, August sightings of the species in Regions 5 & 8, and an abundant spruce cone crop lead to hopes that it may try to nest in other Regions of the state, perhaps even this fall.

### MISCELLANEOUS

Confrontations between people and birds are nothing new but in this enlightened era, surely things must be getting better, right? Although the methods are not the same, the results often are, with the birds on the losing end. This season in Region 6, the controversial Double-crested Cormorant population control program on Little Galloo Island continued with eggs of over 4300 nests oiled by the NYSDEC. Now comes word of the disruption of a large Great Blue Heron colony in Region 6, which contained almost 600 active nests in 1999. About one-third to one-half of these birds relocated to another nearby island where the owner, who had a permit, used harassment measures to reduce the number of successful nests down to only 10-20% of the original number.

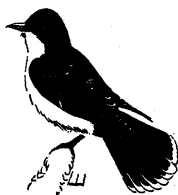
West Nile virus, first detected in coastal areas, has now been found in widespread Regions 1, 4, 7, & 10 and even in very young birds. Since the young birds could not fly far and probably were raised in the vicinity, the virus must now be considered as having gained a solid foothold throughout the State. While the politicians and media have created a lot of hype about the dangers to humans, the virus' effect upon our birds is likely to be far greater.

### RARITIES

Despite concentration on the Atlas this summer, a good number of rarities were found. Leading off with Region 1, two Eared Grebes and two American Avocets continued the tendency of both these species to occur in our westernmost Region. Western Kingbird is much rarer inland than coastally. Thus, two in Region 2 were a great find. A Black-headed Gull there, always a good find, was even better in the summer. The only Loggerhead Shrike this season was one in Region 3. Likewise, a Yellow-breasted Chat in Region 4 was the sole report in the state, and a Dickcissel there was the Region's first since 1988. White-winged Doves have been found in the east in ever increasing numbers, but in New York, those sightings have been almost all coastal. This year one turned up in Region 5. Region 7's Western Tanager was a first for the Region and was found by someone working on an Atlas block. A Summer Tanager in Region 8 was the first there since 1984. Three Roseate Terns were Region 9's first in 25 years. In Region 10, a trio of rare shorebirds was the highlight. These were Red-necked Stint with only five previous records, Little Stint with only two or three, and Sharp-tailed

Sandpiper with only one other acceptable record.

I have selected only the most unusual species to discuss here. The Regional reports contain many other sightings of great interest. In this, the first season of Atlas 2000, it seems appropriate that my choice for Bird of the Season goes to the Common Eiders found nesting in Region 10, the first ever recorded breeding in New York.



## REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

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Western New York residents will likely remember the summer of 2000 as being cool and very wet. June was the fifth wettest in 100 years, with almost twice the normal rainfall at the Buffalo Airport (6.51") and even more to the north. It rained during 18 days of the month and was the cloudiest June of the century, leaving many people eager for summer to really begin. The average temperature was one degree below normal at 64.9°F.

July brought a little relief from the rain as rainfall was near normal at 2.9". However, the summer didn't warm up much. The average temperature was 67.6°, 3.5° below normal. It was the third coolest in 58 years, and sunshine was less than normal at 54%.

The first two weeks of August were very wet, but the rest of the month saw a hot and humid finish to summer. The average temperature was 68°, 1° below normal. Sunshine was below normal again at 57%, but rainfall was an inch less than usual at 3.21". [Weather data excerpted from National Weather Service Web site *Monthly Weather Summary* for Buffalo.]

The Breeding Bird Atlas project brought renewed enthusiasm to early summer birding in the Region. Some great finds were made and the Atlas volunteers also discovered some previously unbirded or underbirded areas that will now likely be covered with more regularity. My personal thoughts on the Atlas echo those of many other local observers in that the project is very rewarding, albeit difficult in some cases, and is a great learning experience for beginner and expert birder alike. This will be a great contribution to our knowledge of birds in the Region.

The best Atlas find was a pair of **Dickcissels** that nested near Lake Erie in the Town of Pomfret. Dick Miga discovered a singing male on 13 June on the same road where a small colony of Dickcissels nested in 1976. A female appeared later in June and by early August three fledglings were observed. This was the first documented nesting by this species in the Region since 1988. Preliminary research by Bill Watson found a direct connection between historical breeding records of Dickcissels in the Region and drought conditions in the Midwest (*The Prothonotary*, Buffalo Ornithological Society, Volume 66, No. 7, July 2000).

Another significant Atlas find in the Town of Pomfret was a pair of **Sedge Wrens** documented by Terry Mosher. This was the first documented sighting of this species in the Region since 1993, and like the Dickcissels, the birds were found in an historical nesting location (1986).

Some other grassland species, such as Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow, were reported in greater numbers than in recent summers past. However, this was a result of increased observer effort for the Atlas project. Eleven singing Henslow's Sparrows were found in Lancaster at previously unknown breeding

locations. This significant find represents the highest numbers in the Region for this species in over 20 years.

Fifteen young Great Egrets, from a probable six nests, were counted at the Motor Island rookery. A pair of **Snowy Egrets** was observed several times in June and July at the island and three were observed on 30 June at adjacent Strawberry Island, a new high for the Region. These sightings contribute to optimistic anticipation of future nesting at this location.

Three broods of Redheads were documented by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel at Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. There has been a Redhead release program in recent years at the refuge.

Peregrine Falcons successfully nested at two locations in the Region. Four young fledged from the Statler Tower site in downtown Buffalo and were banded by NYSDEC personnel. The video camera installed behind the nesting ledge provided some incredible footage for the second year in a row. Peregrines also nested in the Niagara Gorge at Goat Island and two fledglings were reported.

Vivian Pitzrick reported that the number of species was the highest ever but the population of territorial males was the fourth lowest since inception of her breeding bird study plot in Belmont, Allegany County, in 1984. She also indicated that abundant wild foods included rabbits, voles, weed seed, hickory nuts, wild grapes, and fruit of gray-barked dogwood, buckthorn and honeysuckle.

Besides breeding birds, there were also some great transient records this summer. Two different **Eared Grebes** were sighted at the Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant, continuing the species' affinity for this location. A **Tricolored Heron** at Tiff Nature Preserve in June follows the only previous June record from last summer. Another very impressive find was an immature **Parasitic Jaeger** at Dunkirk Harbor on the unusual date of 14 July. This sighting marks only the second jaeger record for July for the Region.

Some heavy rain in early August grounded a number of shorebird migrants but there were no consistently good locations throughout the season. Many local birders head to the Canadian shore of Lake Erie for shorebirding, which contributes to the low number of Regional records. Some very good species salvaged the otherwise poor summer shorebird season: **American Avocets** were seen on at least two dates at Dunkirk Harbor, Willet and Whimbrel were reported from Chautauqua County, several Western Sandpiper sightings were more than usual, and two separate Red-necked Phalaropes were warmly welcomed.

Other highlights for the season include: Tundra Swan, Bufflehead, Sandhill Crane, Long-eared Owl, Whip-poor-will, White-eyed Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow and Pine Siskin.

Special thanks go to Richard Rosche for his Region 1 Breeding Bird Atlas summary article and Dick Miga for supplying Chautauqua County records.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BBA – Breeding Bird Atlas project; BuSP – Buckhorn Island SP, ERIE; BWWTP – Batavia Waste Water Treatment Plant, GENE; DH – Dunkirk Harbor, CHAU; GHSP – Golden Hill SP, NIAG; GI – Goat Island, NIAG; INWR – Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, GENE/ORLE; JAS – Jamestown Audubon Sanctuary, CHAU; JDSP – Joseph Davis SP, NIAG; LBSP – Lakeside Beach SP, ORLE; NR – Niagara River; OOWMA – Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area, GENE; SPNS – Sinking Ponds Nature Sanctuary, East Aurora, ERIE; Tiff NP – Tiff Nature Preserve, Buffalo, ERIE; WeBSP – Wendt Beach SP, ERIE; WoBSP – Woodlawn Beach SP, ERIE; WTSP – Wilson-Tuscarora SP, NIAG.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** DH 14 Jul (DM); 7 Chautauqua L CHAU 19 Jul (LC), impressive count for summer.  
**EARED GREBE:** BWWTP 26 Jul (WW!) thru 7 Aug (WD! BK!); BWWTP 26 Aug (MM!) thru 31 Aug (BK!), different bird showing more facial plumes; 2nd and 3rd reports from this location this year.  
**Double-crested Cormorant:** 56 nests Reef Lighthouse NR 5 Jul; 620 Strawberry I NR 16 Aug; 1250 BuSP 25 Aug (WW); high counts continue.  
**Least Bittern:** CO y BuSP Jun (BBA); CO INWR (BBA); Cheney Rd Marsh CATT 17, 19 Jul (MMi, KV); good atlas finds.  
**Great Blue Heron:** max 150 OOWMA 4 Jun; 49 nests Motor I, NR (WW).  
**Great Egret:** 15 y Motor I, NR 12 Jul

(WW); Sherman CHAU 19 Jul; Attica WYOM 20 Jul; Cheney Rd Marsh CATT 8 Aug; 4 BWWTP 11 Aug; max 26 INWR 21 Aug, high count.  
**SNOWY EGRET:** 3 Strawberry I, NR 30 Jun (WW!), Regional record high count; 2 Motor I, NR 9 Jun, 26 Jun, 6 Jul (WW!), continued presence from late May.  
**TRICOLORED HERON:** Tiff NP 12, 14 Jun (RA! BK!), 2nd Regional summer record.  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Chautauqua L CHAU 24 Jun (DM), unusual location.  
**TUNDRA SWAN:** ad Niagara Falls NIAG 3 Jul thru (TY, LL, WD!), possibly injured.  
**Am. Wigeon:** 2 Tonawanda ERIE 15 Jun; 2 BWWTP 2 Jul; 3 Times Beach ERIE 4 Jul; OOWMA 3 Aug; more

locations than usual for summer.

**Am. Black Duck:** BWWTP 16 Jul; OOWMA 3 Aug; WTSP 8 Aug; summer sightings now notable.

**Blue-winged Teal:** arr 6 BWWTP 11 Aug; max 80 BWWTP 26 Aug.

**N. Shoveler:** 3 BWWTP 2 Jul; Alabama GENE 11 Jul; max 113 BWWTP 31 Aug.

**N. Pintail:** OOWMA 3 Aug; 2 BWWTP 31 Aug.

**Green-winged Teal:** Wethersfield WYOM thru 10 Jul; OOWMA 3 Aug; max 20 BWWTP 26 Aug.

**Redhead:** max 6 INWR 11 Jul; 3 broods of y documented at INWR by USFWS (BBA); 2 BWWTP 26 Aug, unusual summer location.

**Lesser Scaup:** BWWTP 5-31 Aug.

**Bufflehead:** BWWTP 2 Jul thru; very rare in summer.

**Com. Merganser:** DH 12 Jul; 8 BWWTP 16 Jul; Motor I, NR 16 Aug; unusual summer locations.

**Ruddy Duck:** INWR 19 Jul; max 69 BWWTP 26 Jul, previous high summer count was 22 at this location in 1998.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** Amity L ALLE 14 Jun; BuSP 22 Jun; multiple sightings near Allegheny Res CATT (several nests) and INWR (no known nests).

**Bald Eagle:** 2 ad at nest INWR thru season; 2 ad (no nest) Attica Res WYOM thru season; imm FNFP 9 Jul (RDR); ad Findley L CHAU 5 Aug (ST); imm Charlotte CHAU 29 Aug (FR).

**N. Goshawk:** ad Alfred ALLE 4 Jun (BK); 2 ad + 3 y Eagle WYOM 25 Jun (PY, MS), 4th straight summer at this location.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** ad Grand I ERIE 3 Jun (WD, BP), unusual location; LBSP 28 Aug, first migrant noted.

**Merlin:** arr Kenmore ERIE 27 Aug (JT!); WeBSP 28 Aug (DH); continues recent pattern of earlier migrants.

**Peregrine Falcon:** 4 y Buffalo ERIE,

successfully fledged 12-16 Jun (BB); 2 GI 11 Jun (TO), 1-2 y fledged from well-concealed nest on Niagara Gorge cliffs GI (BB).

**Virginia Rail:** 2 Reinstein Preserve ERIE 3 Jun; ad + 4 y Tonawanda ERIE 22 Jul (WW); new locations discovered from atlas work.

**Am. Coot:** CO Buffalo Harbor ERIE (BBA), unusual location.

**SANDHILL CRANE:** flying west over Wilson Harbor NIAG 24 Jun (BE), 4th June record.

**Semipalmated Plover:** arr 12 OOWMA 3 Aug.

**AMERICAN AVOCET:** DH 20 Jun (DM); 2 DH 10 Jul (TW); impressive showing.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** arr 12 OOWMA 2 Aug.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr 2 BWWTP 16 Jul.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** arr 3 Burgeson NS CHAU 17 Jul; 28 OOWMA 3 Aug (WD, BP), high count.

**Willet:** 2 DH 7 Aug (JG); less than annual in summer.

**Upland Sandpiper:** Niagara Falls Airport NIAG 2 Jun; Sheldon WYOM 4 Jun; 4 East Otto CATT 12 Jun; 3 Otto CATT 12 Jun; 3 Tillman WMA 16 Jun; increased sightings from atlas coverage; 5 Buffalo Airport ERIE 14 Aug, first migrants noted.

**Whimbrel:** Dunkirk Airport CHAU 3 Aug (JG); less than annual in summer.

**Sanderling:** arr 5 DH 21 Jul; only report.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** arr DH 21 Jul.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER:** 4 GHSP 21 Aug (WW! BK! DS!); 2 BWTP 31 Aug (BK!); good showing for this rarely recorded species.

**Least Sandpiper:** arr BWWTP 16 Jul.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** arr INWR 28 Aug, only report.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr 60 OOWMA 2 Aug (BK).



**Stilt Sandpiper:** 15 OOWMA 3 Aug (WD, BP), good count; 2 JAS 17 Aug.  
**Short-billed Dowitcher:** arr DH 20 Jul; Pomfret CHAU 21 Jul; 8 BWWTP 26 Jul; max 29 OOWMA 2 Aug (BK).  
**Com. Snipe:** 2 East Otto ERIE 12 Jun (WD, BP); INWR 21 Aug; only reports.  
**Red-necked Phalarope:** Jamestown Airport CHAU 17 Aug (KV); Barker WWTP NIAG 28-29 Aug (BK, DH, WW); less than annual in summer.  
**PARASITIC JAEGER:** imm DH 14 Jul (DM), unverified; 2nd Jul record for Region.  
**Bonaparte's Gull:** max 114 WoBSP 28 Aug, occasional summer loafing area.  
**Caspian Tern:** 5 DH 25 Jun; BWWTP 2 Jul; slightly early summer records; max 19 Olcott NIAG 13 Aug.  
**Forster's Tern:** Barcelona Harbor CHAU 25 Jul (BS); BWWTP 26 Jul (WW!); Jul records unusual; DH 1 Aug (DM); Somerset NIAG 13 Aug (BK).  
**Black Tern:** max 9 INWR 11 Jul; JAS 30 Jul.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**White-billed Cuckoo:** 5 Porter to Somerset NIAG 4 Jun (WD), high BBS count.  
**Long-eared Owl:** GHSP 18 Jun (WW, BK), follow up on May sighting there.  
**Com. Nighthawk:** 2 Buffalo ERIE 29 Jun (MG); decreased sightings even in downtown Buffalo; max 200 Cambria and Wilson NIAG 25 Aug (SO), high migratory count.  
**WHIP-POOR-WILL:** Lockport NIAG 17 Jun (BRBA), 1st summer record since 1988.  
**Red-headed Woodpecker:** OOWMA 4 Jun; Shelby ORLE 7 Aug; Somerset NIAG 13 Aug; 3 other CHAU reports where species occurs more frequently along L Erie.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Reinstein

Preserve ERIE 3 Jun (MM), late spring migrant; WeBSP 28 Aug (DH).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Alexander GENE 4 Jun (KF), late migrant; arr Snyder ERIE 17 Aug (BK).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** reported in 7 locations during breeding season from ERIE, GENE, WYOM, CATT; increasing.

**WHITE-EYED VIREO:** Allenberg Bog CATT (JC, NC), excellent atlas find.

**Com. Raven:** reported in 6 ALLE locations; 3 Pike WYOM 18 Jul (RDR); Orangeville WYOM 4 Aug (RDR); 2 Wethersfield WYOM 20 Aug (DJ); sightings document increase in WYOM.

**Bank Swallow:** 500 + 839 nest holes GHSP 16 Jun (WW); impressive colony on L Ontario.

**Cliff Swallow:** 15 BuSP 10 Jun, building nests; 2 ad + y at nest Niagara Falls NIAG 16 Jul (WD), 1st NIAG breeding location.

**Brown Creeper:** reported from 5 locations in ERIE, NIAG.

**Carolina Wren:** reported from 6 locations in ERIE, ALLE, CHAU.

**SEDGE WREN:** 2 Pomfret CHAU 24 Jun (TM!), 1-3 seen at this location thru 24 Aug; 1st verified record in Region since 1993.

**Swainson's Thrush:** Tonawanda ERIE 1 Jun, late migrant; 2 AISP 28 Jun (PH).

**N. Mockingbird:** Darien GENE 21 Jun (TH), unusual location.

#### WARBLERS

**Golden-winged Warbler:** 2 Barre ORLE 4 Jun; 2 Pendleton NIAG 5 Jun; GHSP 29 Jun; Lancaster ERIE 9 Jul; Tuscarora Indian Reservation NIAG 20 Jun.; BuSP 12 Aug.

**"Brewster's" Warbler:** Newstead ERIE 4 Jun; 2 Pendleton NIAG 5 Jun; Hanging Bog WMA ALLE 11 Jun (PY); FL fed by female Blue-winged Lancaster ERIE 9 Jul (MM).

**Nashville Warbler:** Andover ALLE 9

Jun (EB); only report.

**Magnolia Warbler:** 3 Lewiston NIAG 1 Jul (DR), unusual location.

**Cape May Warbler:** arr WoBSP 26 Aug.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** SPNS 5 Jun; expanding breeding range.

**Pine Warbler:** 2 Phillips Creek SF ALLE 4 Jun (BK! RS!); 2 East Otto SF CATT 13 Jun and 22 Jul (WD! BP!); East Aurora ERIE 19 Jun (LH); Bush Hill SF CATT 3 Jul (BK!); increasing as breeder in Region.

**Prairie Warbler:** reported from 11 ALLE locations.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** arr GHSP 21 Aug.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** three sightings 4 Jun; arr Snyder ERIE 25 Aug.

**Cerulean Warbler:** Tuscarora Indian Reservation NIAG 1 Jul; Alfred ALLE 13 Jul; good atlas finds.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** INWR (BBA); reports decreased in recent years.

**Canada Warbler:** arr GHSP 13 Aug.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** 2 ad + 2 y Andover ALLE 7 Aug (EB!), plus possible Chipping x Clay-colored hybrid; 2 singing males + 1 juv New Hudson ALLE (RDR).

**Vesper Sparrow:** 2 Newfane NIAG 4

Jun; 2 Andover ALLE thru Jun; Pomfret CHAU 21 Jul; only reports.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** reported from 10 locations in ERIE, NIAG, CHAU, ALLE; increase likely from atlas coverage.

**Heenslow's Sparrow:** 2 Lockport NIAG 1 Jun; 2 Clarence ERIE 4 Jun; 2 N. Harmony CATT 17 Jun; 11 Lancaster ERIE Jun and Jul (MM), highest Regional count since 1979; Otto ERIE 6 Jul; 3 Pomfret CHAU 17 Jul.

**White-throated Sparrow:** reported from 5 ALLE locations; 1 banded Beaver Meadow NS WYOM 4 Jun (KF).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** juv FNSP 1 Jul (LL), unusual breeding location along L Ontario.

**DICKCISSEL:** ad Pomfret CHAU 13 Jun (DM), nesting pair followed, 3 y there 4 Aug (DM); 1st documented breeding in Region since 1988.

**Bobolink:** 100 Wethersfield WYOM 19-21 Aug (DJ), only large migrant flock reported.

**Orchard Oriole:** Collins ERIE 29 Jul (BRBA); JDSP 9 Jun (SO); only reports.

**Red Crossbill:** Almond ALLE 22 Jun (EB); 4 W. Almond ALLE 31 Aug (EB).

**PINE SISKIN:** Colden ERIE 17 Jul and 24 Aug (KL!); rare in summer.

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## REGION 2 – GENESEE

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There will be those who will claim that there was no summer this year. Or at least that it was only a few days long. Meteorologically that may have been true, but nevertheless, the birds acknowledged that there was indeed a summer season. June continued the wet trend that was established in the spring season. The total of 4.47" of precipitation was 1.47" above normal. It was the 14th wettest June in the last 100 years. The region experienced rain on 22 days. The average temperature of 65.8°F was only 0.7° above normal. No extremes were recorded during the month; it was just wet and dreary.

July was about normal in terms of precipitation. The 3.66" was 0.95" above normal, but the interesting statistic is that 2.36" of that total fell during a deluge on the 15th. It was the fourth highest daily total ever in July. Temperatures were very comfortable in July. The average of 67.1° was just over 3° below normal. It was the second coolest July in the last 100 years. Warm periods included just the first three days of the month and the last four. The rest of the days were cool.

August came in pretty close to the long term norms for the Region. The rainfall was a meager 0.71" above normal at 4.11". The bulk of that came during the first 12 days of the month. The last half of the month produced only an early downpour on the 23rd. The average temperature of 67.5° was 0.5° below normal, with the bulk of the month being quite cool and only the final week bringing traditional summer heat and humidity.

The term often used to describe the season was "uneventful." The spring and early summer wetness may have caused some difficulty for nesters but there are no data for proof. The only suggestion of such a problem was the presence of some late season feeding of young for species that should have been through by that point. Chipping Sparrows in juvenile plumage were noted into the next season. Both points suggest either a possible second brood or a renesting after an early failure. Other than that there were very few trends to note. Far below the average number of reports were submitted this season. Hopefully it is due to observer fatigue with Atlas 2000 work.

This season also includes the end of the spring migration and the beginning of the fall migration. In both cases things were pretty slow. The usual late spring shorebird movements were lackluster as were the early return movements that often begin in July. The August passerine movements were quite poor. Dispersal of young from nesting territories was generally noted, but few true migrants were observed.

One Regional advantage this season was the continued monitoring of passing birds at Hamlin Beach State Park by Bill Symonds throughout the season. This produced some loon sightings as well as numerous reports of lingering waterfowl. Black Scoters seen by Bill on 13 June were record late. Paul Spindler also reported

loons during the season while fishing well offshore in Lake Ontario. There was even a report of Red-throated Loon in the second half of June.

Brett Ewald noted good numbers of Great Blue Herons at the end of the nesting season. A single pond along the lakeshore harbored 25 individuals. Black-crowned Night-Herons continued to be hard to find. Once again Canada Goose and Mute Swan experienced a good nesting season. Numbers of the former continue to grow, causing some turmoil with Regional residents, and the latter's totals remained stable, creating much consternation in the birding community. Numbers of native nesting waterfowl like American Black Duck and Blue-winged Teal continue to drop as the numbers of geese and swans increase.

Two of the fledglings of the Peregrine Falcons that nested on the Kodak Tower in Rochester disappeared, causing some concern among those following this nesting. At last report, one of the young females was still feeding in downtown Rochester. A Northern Goshawk in Parma in July was interesting. Red-shouldered Hawk in Silver Spring in June was encouraging for this once more common nester. The August flight of Red-tailed Hawks produced a good total, but conditions did not provide for any really good single day flights. Shorebird habitat was poor. Even Ontario Beach at Charlotte was subpar. The county crews seem to be cleaning the beach very early daily and pushing the shorebirds out. The first Parasitic Jaegers of the year were reported from Hamlin Beach in August. Little Gull and Black-headed Gull passing Hamlin Beach in July were good sightings. Black Tern may soon be extirpated as a nester in the Region. It was a dismal season for this Regionally endangered species with very few reports of young birds.

Of continued interest are Northern Saw-whet Owl reports. This summer we received a single report from Pittsford in June and three reports from Penfield in August. This follows the record of a dead juvenile that was found in Greece in late May. Common Nighthawk and Whip-poor-will continue to be scarce. There were good numbers of Red-headed Woodpeckers reported by Jim Kimball from the Nations Road area this season. This species fluctuates significantly in numbers reported from that last stronghold in the Region. There were no reports of Sedge Wren.

Of note among the warblers was the presence of Pine Warbler at Hamlin Beach, Mendon Ponds and Pittsford during the season. Golden-winged Warbler continues to be of concern Regionally, with a max of only three reported from Murray in July.

Sparrow highlights included 18 Grasshopper Sparrows reported by Jim Kimball in the Nations Road area in June and reports of Clay-colored Sparrow at Mendon Ponds in June and July. Pine Siskin was reported throughout the season.

The bird of the season was Western Kingbird, discovered by Richard O'Hara and Robert McKinney in Hamlin on 30 August. At first there was a single bird, but by the end of the day there were two individuals frequenting the same short stretch of road. A number of observers were treated to their calling and flycatching.

A total of 195 species was recorded for the season. The total of 254 for the year is significantly lower than last year and below the ten-year average.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BB - Braddock Bay; C - Cuylerville; CL - Clarkson; G - Greece; GE - Geneseo; H - Hamlin; HB - Hamlin Beach State Park; HP - Hogan Point (Greece); M - Manitou; MP - Mendon Ponds Park; NR - Nations Road (Avon); P - Perinton; PI - Pittsford; PO - Portage; W - Webster

### LOONS - DUCKS

**Red-throated Loon:** HB 18 Jun (WS), late.  
**Com. Loon:** L Ontario all Jul; Silver L 6 Aug.  
**Horned Grebe:** arr HB 27 Aug.  
**Double-crested Cormorant:** max 460 HB 13 Aug.  
**Great Egret:** Marion WAYN 19 Jun.  
**Am. Wigeon:** max 8 HB 25 Jul, rare in summer.  
**N. Pintail:** HB 11 and 15 Jul, unusual in summer.  
**Greater Scaup:** HB 3 Jun, late; HB 10 Jul, unusual in summer.  
**Lesser Scaup:** arr 2 HB 13 Aug, early.  
**White-winged Scoter:** 2 HB 3 Jun; 3 HB 24 Jun; 2 HB 6 Aug; max 124 HB 20 Aug.  
**Black Scoter:** HB 13 Jun (WS), record late.  
**Long-tailed Duck:** HB 25 Jul, unusual in summer.  
**Bufflehead:** female arr HB 20 Aug, summering?  
**Red-breasted Merganser:** pr WAYN 24

Jun, nesting?; 1-5 HB all Jul.  
**Ruddy Duck:** 1-2 C 19 and 27 Jun.

### HAWKS - ALCIDS

**Bald Eagle:** 34 reported BB 1-31 Aug.  
**N. Goshawk:** imm Parma 17 Jul (DT); BB 7 Aug.  
**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Silver Spring 23 Jun (JK); only report.  
**Merlin:** arr W 15 Aug (JC).  
**Black-bellied Plover:** arr HB 8 Aug.  
**Am. Golden-Plover:** arr 10, 1 HB, C 27 Aug.  
**Semipalmated Plover:** arr 6 HB 25 Jul.  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** HP 17 Jun, late or early?  
**Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr HB 2 Jul.  
**Solitary Sandpiper:** arr W 13 Jul.  
**Whimbrel:** CL 16 Jul (RS); HB 19 Jul (WS); HB 30 Jul (WS); 11 reports in Aug; max 3 BB 12 Aug.  
**Ruddy Turnstone:** arr 3 HB 30 Jul.  
**Sanderling:** arr 4 HB 23 Jul.  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** last P 3 Jun; arr 2 HB 23 Jul.  
**Western Sandpiper:** arr 2 HB 30 Jul.

**Least Sandpiper:** arr GE 3 Jul.  
**Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr W 13 Jul.  
**Stilt Sandpiper:** arr 3 W 30 Jul.  
**Short-billed Dowitcher:** arr NR 5 Jul.  
**Red-necked Phalarope:** arr 7 HB 27 Aug (WS).  
**Parasitic Jaeger:** arr 2 HB 27 Aug (WS).  
**Little Gull:** ad HB 19 Jul.  
**BLACK-HEADED GULL:** 1st summer plumage HB 19 Jul (WS).  
**Black Tern:** 2 HB 22 Aug.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**N. Saw-whet Owl:** PI 27 Jun (AC); P 26, 28, 29 Aug (RMc, CMc).  
**Com. Nighthawk:** HP 1st week Jun; scarce; max 29 Brighton 30 Aug.  
**Red-headed Woodpecker:** max 12 NR 3 Jun.  
**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** 5 (2 ad + 3 y) Lima all Jun (JF); Durand-Eastman P 26 Jun, unusual location at that time.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** last 2 M 2 Jun.  
**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** last M 2 Jun; arr M 10 Aug.  
**WESTERN KINGBIRD:** 1-2 H 30 Aug

(RMc, RO, et al).  
**Winter Wren:** arr W 23 Aug.

#### WARBLERS

**Golden-winged Warbler:** max 3 Murray ? Jul.  
**Magnolia Warbler:** arr M 20 Aug.  
**Pine Warbler:** HB all Jun; 2 MP 10 Jun; 3 PI 26 Jun.  
**Bay-breasted Warbler:** arr P 26 Aug.  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** last HP 7-14 Jun; arr BB 26 Aug.  
**Wilson's Warbler:** last M 15 Jun, late; arr Portage 11 Aug.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** MP 8 Jun (DS); MP 20 Jul (CC), near same location as last year.  
**Grasshopper Sparrow:** max 18 NR 3 Jun.  
**White-throated Sparrow:** Bushnell's Basin 16 Jun (HH), very late.  
**Orchard Oriole:** max 6 GE 27 Jun.  
**Pine Siskin:** G 17 Jul; G 25 Jul; Portage 11 Aug.

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## REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES REGION

**BILL OSTRANDER**

80 Westmont Avenue, Elmira NY 14905

Summer 2000 was rather pleasant, with June and August temperatures near normal and July temperatures well below normal, the highs more than 4°F below normal. June continued the wet trend of the previous five months, with precipitation about 30% above normal. July reversed that trend with only 2.90" compared to a normal of 3.45". August was emphatically dry, with only half the normal precipitation.

The effect of the weather on the birds was not readily apparent. Water levels in wetlands were generally good and likely promoted successful breeding. At The Center at Horseheads Marsh, the early high water levels overcame sandbagging at the south end and resulted in the water at that end escaping into the Susquehanna drainage system. The north end, however, which drains into the St. Lawrence system, maintained good levels. The Main Pool at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge had plenty of water in contrast to last year's drawdown level. Bill Evans noted in early August that Cayuga Lake had been the highest throughout the summer that he had seen in his 12 years in the Ithaca area. He observed that the high water and cooler temperatures were probably responsible for the lack of floating vegetation, which in turn was causing a much lower concentration of Mallards in the area than last year.

Numerous changes in birder activity probably masked weather effects. Many of the Region's birders were busy searching for evidence of breeding birds for the Breeding Bird Atlas Project. Few people shared their Atlas sightings, however. Dave Russell and Geo Kloppel did post many of their sightings, which supplemented my own Atlas observations. Perhaps because of the volunteer time put into the Atlas, no one undertook a regular monitoring of the shorebirds at Montezuma. Offsetting this to some extent was the new Once-a-Month Count at Montezuma, which provided a new source of data. Regular monitoring of the Chemung River in downtown Elmira was curtailed, partly because of the Atlas and mostly because both Dave Russell and I changed job locations away from the City of Elmira. Dave Russell conducted a census by canoe of the Chemung River between Big Flats and Elmira. Even the Ithaca June Count changed this year. In anticipation of lower than usual availability of June counters for the previously one-day event, counters were given an entire week to cover their assigned areas. Last year I was making regular extended visits to The Center at Horseheads Marsh. This year Dave Russell covered the area for the Breeding Bird Atlas.

The following account includes comparisons of reported bird populations in the Region between summer 2000 and summer 1999, with occasional reference to a species' status in summer 1998. Unless otherwise noted, the cited comparisons showed statistically significant changes ( $\chi^2 > 3.84$ ;  $P = 0.05$ ). A discussion of my

methodology and its limitations can be found in the Region 3 report that appeared in the December 1999 issue of *The Kingbird*. Of the 228 species reported in the last three summers in the Region, 142 showed no significant change in populations between summer 1999 and summer 2000. Thirty-one species increased and 55 decreased.

Double-crested Cormorant numbers increased in the Region. Perhaps some birds in the Region were among those dispersed by control measures exerted on breeding populations in Lake Ontario. Great Blue Heron was one of just three species to increase for the second consecutive year. Great Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons were also more numerous. Turkey Vultures were reported in lower numbers. Mike Powers tallied Chemung County's first ever **Black Vulture** while on his daily commute from Steuben County to Tompkins County.

Canada Geese and Mallards were both down in numbers. The lack of Mallards on Cayuga Lake at Stewart Park in Ithaca was largely responsible for the lower numbers of Mallards. The lack of reports of any kind from the Lowe Pond area in Big Flats is largely responsible for the apparent difference in Canada Geese. An influx of Blue-winged Teal at Montezuma NWR in late August accounted for that species' increase. A large increase in Hooded Mergansers on the Ithaca June Count plus a couple of families in Chemung County bolstered that species to its second consecutive summer increase. Successful breeding of Common Mergansers along the Chemung River probably led to the large gathering in Elmira. Northern Pintail, Canvasback and Redhead were rare summer sightings at Montezuma.

Raptors showed no gains. Reports of Northern Harrier, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk and American Kestrel were all down. Wild Turkeys were way down from the previous summer.

Virginia Rails were more scarce this summer, particularly at The Center at Horseheads Marsh. Common Moorhens and American Coots were decidedly higher in numbers. The water-filled Main Pool at Montezuma with lots of emergent vegetation resulting from last year's drawdown created ideal conditions for these species. Moorhens doubled and the coots went from four to 152.

Both yellowlegs, Solitary, Semipalmated, Least and Pectoral sandpipers, Sanderling, Short-billed Dowitcher and Common Snipe decreased in numbers. Upland Sandpipers dropped precipitously from 35 to three. Dana Rohleder found a godwit at Montezuma, but did not have good enough conditions to identify it to species. Forster's Tern, rare in the Region in summer, was reported from Montezuma NWR three times. It was almost inevitable that all five super birders named Matt would eventually appear at the same time in the same place. The time was 26 August and the place was the birder corral at May's Point, Montezuma NWR. Then and there, Matts Medler, Sarver, Victoria, Williams and Young together found the Region's only Buff-breasted Sandpiper of the summer.

In spite of a relatively high Rock Dove count on the Ithaca June Count, Rock and Mourning doves were reported in lower numbers throughout the Region. Cuckoos and owls were all up this year, but not significantly. Matt Young found a



Long-eared Owl in Summerhill. Common Nighthawks passed through Elmira in good numbers the last week of August.

The Ithaca June Count's high count of Belted Kingfishers contributed to a Regionwide increase for the species. None of the woodpeckers showed changes. Several people went to see the Red-headed Woodpecker that appeared in Brooktondale in June. James Manley also had one in his backyard near Corning.

Alder Flycatchers and Eastern Phoebes were down this year, but Acadian Flycatchers, reported from several new locations, were up. John Greenly discovered and Chris and Diane Tessaglia-Hymes confirmed a Loggerhead Shrike in late June in Lansing. All of the swallows showed significant changes. Purple Martins, Bank and Barn swallows were all up. Tree, Northern Rough-winged and Cliff were all down. This is exactly the opposite of last year's situation.

In spite of the arrival of West Nile Virus in the Region, American Crow numbers held steady. Fish Crows were down, but not significantly, in spite of their absence from their traditional stronghold at Stewart Park. Blue Jays and Common Ravens were both down.

House Wrens were down, but Marsh Wrens were up, thanks primarily to the Montezuma Once-a-Month Count. Dave Russell found no Marsh Wrens at The Center at Horseheads where there were several last year. Sedge Wrens appeared at two locations in Tompkins County.

Veerys and robins were down, but Hermit Thrushes were up. Bill Evans reported hearing more than a dozen Veerys during the last three hours of 10 Aug and the first three hours of 11 Aug. Northern Mockingbirds decreased from last year. Cedar Waxwings were up and European Starlings were down.

Although the Ithaca June Count had record lows for several warbler species, Atlas reports bolstered their numbers so that most were unchanged from last year. The Montezuma Once-a-Month Count pushed Cerulean Warbler numbers up. Dave Russell's canoe trip down the Chemung River aided the increase in Northern Waterthrushes. Strangely, another streamside species, the American Redstart was down. Common Yellowthroat was up. Tim Whitens rediscovered the "**Lawrence's**" Warbler in Cameron that Dave Russell and I had found in May. Bill Evans reported two early-arriving Bay-breasted Warblers in late August. Even more unusual, Meena Haribal discovered one in her Atlas block near Cayutaville in early July.

Indigo Bunting was down, as were many of the sparrows and blackbirds. Savannah, Grasshopper, Song, Swamp and White-throated sparrows all decreased. Bobolinks, Red-winged Blackbirds, Eastern Meadowlarks and Baltimore Orioles were all down as well. Eastern Towhee was the only sparrow species to increase. Brown-headed Cowbirds was one of the three species to increase for the second year in a row. Purple Finches were up from last year. Pine Siskins made summer appearances. John and Sue Gregoire were even able to confirm breeding of siskins for the first time at the Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory. House Finches, American Goldfinches and House Sparrows all declined.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ChR – Chemung River; CoH – Connecticut Hill; DrL – Dryden Lake; EWMA – Erwin State Wildlife Management Area; FLNF – Finger Lakes National Forest; GAWS – Gleason Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary; GlMe – Gleason Meadows; IJC – Ithaca June Count; KH – Kestral Haven Avian Migration Observatory SCHU; MNWR – Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; MtPl – Mt. Pleasant TOMP; MyPt – Myers Point; SCP – Salmon Creek Preserve TOMP; SF – State Forest; StP – Stewart Park TOMP; TCAH – The Center at Horseheads CHEM; U – University; WMA – Wildlife Management Area.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Pied-billed Grebe:** max 16 MNWR 7 Aug.  
**Double-crested Cormorant:** max 100 MNWR Jul.  
**Am. Bittern:** MNWR 4 Jun-15 Aug; TCAH 9 Jun; DrL 19 Aug.  
**Least Bittern:** MNWR 4 Jun-1 Aug; TCAH 4-15 Jun.  
**Great Blue Heron:** max 131 MNWR 15

Aug.  
**Great Egret:** max 30 MNWR 15 Aug, high.  
**Green Heron:** 9 TCAH 9 Jun; max 33 IJC 15 Jun, high.  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** arr 2 Elmira Dam 18 Jul (BO), early; max 10 MNWR 20 Aug.  
**BLACK VULTURE:** Big Flats 23 Jun (MPol), first CHEM report.

**SNOW GOOSE:** MNWR 6 Jun (MS&V), only report, very late.  
**Gadwall:** IJC 15 Jun; max 7 MNWR 7 Aug.  
**Am. Wigeon:** max 2 MNWR 13 Aug; MNWR 15 Aug.  
**Mallard:** max 259 IJC 15 Jun; 201 StP 28 Aug.  
**Blue-winged Teal:** max 81 MNWR 26 Aug.  
**N. Shoveler:** max 3 MNWR 7 Aug.  
**N. PINTAIL:** MNWR 2 Jul (MOMBC); MNWR 25 Jul (MS&V).  
**Green-winged Teal:** 5 TCAH 12 Aug; max 81 MNWR 26 Aug.  
**Canvasback:** max & arr 1 MNWR 28 Jul (BRo); MNWR 21 Aug (CW).  
**Redhead:** max 4 MNWR 2 Jul, Aug 6 (MOMBC), high; MNWR 15 Aug (MS&V).  
**scaup (Sp):** MNWR 1 Aug (MS&V); only report.  
**Hooded Merganser:** max 15 IJC 15 Jun, high; 9 TCAH 15 Jun.  
**Com. Merganser:** max 34 Elmira 22 Aug, high.  
**Ruddy Duck:** max 6 MNWR 2 Jul, high.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** max 11 MNWR 7 Aug, high.  
**Bald Eagle:** max 6 MNWR 15 Aug.  
**N. Harrier:** max 3 FLNF 3 Jun; MyPt 13 Jun.  
**Broad-winged Hawk:** max 7 IJC 15 Jun, high; 2 Beech Hill Gorge TOMP 11 Aug.  
**Red-tailed Hawk:** max 30 IJC 15 Jun; 7 ChR 22 Jul.  
**Am. Kestrel:** max 8 IJC 15 Jun; 3 MtPl 18 Aug.  
**Merlin:** arr MNWR 20 Aug; MNWR 26 Aug; Sapsucker Woods TOMP 29 Aug.  
**Peregrine Falcon:** last FLNF 3 Jun (D&KGr); arr MNWR 20 Aug; max 2 MNWR 21 Aug.  
**Ruffed Grouse:** max 9 IJC 15 Jun; 5 Lansing 20 Aug.  
**Wild Turkey:** max 15 Rathbone 21 Jul;

11 Orange 23 Jul.  
**Virginia Rail:** max 3 TCAH 15 Jun.  
**Sora:** max 3 TCAH 3 Jun; MNWR 9 Jun.  
**Com. Moorhen:** 20 TCAH 22 Jun; max 40 MNWR 6 Aug.  
**Am. Coot:** max 151 MNWR 7 Aug, high.  
**Black-bellied Plover:** last MyPt 3 Jun; arr MNWR 8 Aug; max 5 MNWR 16 Aug.  
**Am. Golden-Plover:** arr MNWR 26 Aug; max 2 MNWR 27 Aug.  
**Semipalmated Plover:** last 2 MNWR 16 Jun (A&JW), late; arr MyPt 11 Jul (BF), early; max 16 MNWR 13 Aug, low.  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** last 2 MNWR 16 Jun (A&JW), late; arr MNWR 14 Jul; max 20 MNWR 13 Aug.  
**Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr 2 MtPl 8 Jul; max 21 MNWR 13 Aug, low.  
**Solitary Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 14 Jul; 2 FLNF 18 Jul; max 4 MNWR 26 Aug.  
**Spotted Sandpiper:** 8 IJC 15 Jun; max 12 StP 28 Aug.  
**Upland Sandpiper:** max 3 Fayette 20 Jun.  
**GODWIT (SP):** MNWR 15 Aug (DRo).  
**Ruddy Turnstone:** max 3 MyPt 7 Jun; last MyPt 13 Jun; arr MNWR 15 Aug.  
**Sanderling:** MyPt 3 Jun; last MyPt 7 Jun; arr MyPt 10 Aug.  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** last 2 MNWR 16 Jun; max 22 MyPt 3 Jun, low; arr MNWR 26 Jul; 20 MNWR 26 Aug.  
**Least Sandpiper:** last 2 MNWR 16 Jun (A&JW), late; arr 10 Jul; max 100 13 Aug.  
**White-rumped Sandpiper:** 3 MyPt 7 Jun; max 6 MyPt 4 Jun; arr MNWR 19 Aug.  
**Baird's Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 1 Aug; max 3 MNWR 24 Aug.  
**Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr MyPt 22 Jul; max 26 MNWR 13 Aug.  
**Dunlin:** MNWR 26 Aug (JC, BRo); only report.  
**Stilt Sandpiper:** arr MNWR 23 Jul; max

10 MNWR 30 Aug.  
**BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER:** 26 Aug; only report.  
**Short-billed Dowitcher:** arr MNWR 26 Jul; max 26 13 Aug.  
**Long-billed Dowitcher:** arr MNWR 21 Jul; MNWR 27 Aug; MNWR 28 Aug.  
**Com. Snipe:** max 7 MNWR 19 Aug.  
**Am. Woodcock:** max 3 IJC 15 Jun; CoH 10 Aug.  
**Wilson's Phalarope:** arr MNWR 20 Aug; MNWR 30 Aug.  
**Red-necked Phalarope:** MNWR 21 Aug; MNWR 27 Aug.  
**Bonaparte's Gull:** MNWR 6 Aug.  
**Ring-billed Gull:** 120 Elmira 27 Jul; max 200 StP 20 Aug, low.  
**Caspian Tern:** arr 7 MyPt 27 Jul; max 51 MyPt 10 Aug; 31 MNWR 15 Aug.  
**Com. Tern:** MyPt 7 Jun; arr MNWR 23 Jul.  
**FORSTER'S TERN:** arr MNWR 26 Jul (BF); MNWR 27 Aug (BF); MNWR 29 Aug (MY).  
**Black Tern:** max 12 MNWR 16 Jun, high.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Rock Dove:** max 202 IJC 15 Jun, high.  
**Black-billed Cuckoo:** 2 FLNF 3 Jun; max 6 IJC 15 Jun.  
**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** max 10 IJC 15 Jun, high.  
**LONG-EARED OWL:** Summerhill 21 Jul (MY).  
**Com. Nighthawk:** max 101 Southport 25 Aug; 32 Elmira Dam 22 Aug.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** max 43 IJC 15 Jun; 11 KH 14 Aug.  
**Belted Kingfisher:** 27 IJC 15 Jun, high; 6 MNWR 7 Aug.  
**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Brooktondale thru 10 Jun; Coming 14 Jun.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**E. Wood-Pewee:** max 138 IJC 15 Jun, low; 11 ChR 22 Jul.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** KH 4 Aug; max 2 KH 14 Aug, high; CoH 31 Aug.  
**Acadian Flycatcher:** max 5 Fillmore Glen SP 24 Jul; 2 SCP 11 Jul.  
**E. Kingbird:** max 46 IJC 15 Jun, low; 10 DrL 19 Aug.  
**LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE:** Lansing 25-26 Jun (JGry, C&DTH).  
**Yellow-throated Vireo:** max 17 IJC 15 Jun; 3 MNWR 4 Jun.  
**Warbling Vireo:** max 48 IJC 15 Jun, low.  
**Blue Jay:** max 238 IJC 15 Jun, high.  
**Am. Crow:** max 751 IJC 15 Jun, high; 131 Elmira 11 Aug.  
**Fish Crow:** max 4 IJC 15 Jun; 4 Dryden 29 Aug.  
**Com. Raven:** max 4 ChR 22 Jul, high; 4 KH 1 Jun.  
**Horned Lark:** max 20 KH 11 Jun.  
**Purple Martin:** max 100 Schuyler Co Fairgrounds 20 Aug; 100 MNWR 19 Aug.  
**Bank Swallow:** 72 IJC 15 Jun; max 2000 Fayette 23 Jul, high.  
**Cliff Swallow:** max 6 Dryden 19 Jun, low; 6 Ledyard 22 Jul.  
**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** max 15 IJC 15 Jun; 10 Summerhill 25 Aug.  
**Carolina Wren:** max 5 IJC 15 Jun; 2 ChR 22 Jul.  
**House Wren:** max 183 IJC 15 Jun, low.  
**Winter Wren:** max 10 IJC 15 Jun; 2 CoH WMA 14 Jun.  
**SEDGE WREN:** max 2 Dryden 20 Jul-16 Aug (KMc).  
**Marsh Wren:** max 56 MNWR 2 Jul, high.  
**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** max 32 IJC 15 Jun.  
**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** max 26 IJC 15 Jun; 12 ChR 22 Jul.  
**E. Bluebird:** max 35 IJC 15 Jun; 10 MtPl 18 Aug.  
**Veery:** max 202 IJC 15 Jun, low; 12 CoH 10 Aug.  
**Hermit Thrush:** max 34 IJC 15 Jun; KH

1 Jun.

**Wood Thrush:** max 228 IJC 15 Jun; 10 Beech Hill Gorge TOMP 11 Aug.

**Brown Thrasher:** max 9 IJC 15 Jun, low; 2 Cameron 21 Jul.

**Cedar Waxwing:** max 480 IJC 15 Jun, high.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** max 46 IJC 15 Jun, low; 6 GIM 1 Jun.

**"LAWRENCE'S" WARBLER:** Cameron 3 Jun (TW), 24 Jun (BO).

**Nashville Warbler:** max 2 IJC 15 Jun; Cameron 21 Jul.

**Yellow Warbler:** max 730 IJC 15 Jun; 25 ChR 22 Jul.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** max 85 IJC 15 Jun, low; 6 TOMP 30 Aug.

**Magnolia Warbler:** max 39 IJC 15 Jun, high; 9 CoH 31 Aug.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** max 28 IJC 15 Jun; 4 Ithaca College 30 Aug.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 36 IJC 15 Jun, low; 8 Dryden 5 Aug.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** max 84 IJC 15 Jun; 9 CoH 31 Aug.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** max 24 IJC 15 Jun; 4 EWMA 3 Jun.

**Pine Warbler:** max 2 IJC 15 Jun; Cornell U 8 Jun.

**Prairie Warbler:** max 8 IJC 15 Jun; 5 GIM 11 Jun.

**BAY-BREASTED WARBLER:** Cayutaville Rd SCHU 9 Jul (MH); max & arr 2 CoH 31 Aug (BE).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** KH 2 Jun; last MNWR 4 Jun.

**Cerulean Warbler:** max 43 MNWR 4 Jun.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** max 18 IJC 15 Jun; 2 Bowman Hill CHEM 2 Jun.

**Am. Redstart:** max 129 IJC 15 Jun, low; 9 EWMA 3 Jun.

**Worm-eating Warbler:** max 2 Bowman Hill CHEM 2 Jun; Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve TOMP 2 Jun.

**Ovenbird:** max 273 IJC 15 Jun, low; 19 EWMA 3 Jun.

**N. Waterthrush:** max 16 IJC 15 Jun; 16 ChR 22 Jul.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** max 16 IJC 15 Jun; 4 EWMA 3 Jun.

**Mourning Warbler:** 10 IJC 15 Jun.

**Com. Yellowthroat:** max 657 IJC 15 Jun; 20 FLNF 3 Jun.

**Hooded Warbler:** max 22 IJC 15 Jun; 2 Cornell U 31 Aug.

**Wilson's Warbler:** arr KH 24 Aug; max 2 Cornell U 31 Aug, high.

**Canada Warbler:** max 14 IJC 15 Jun, low; 4 Caroline 24 Jun.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** max 93 IJC 15 Jun; 6 SCP 10 Jul.

**E. Towhee:** max 103 IJC 15 Jun; 8 GIM 16 Aug.

**Vesper Sparrow:** max 2 IJC 15 Jun, low; FLNF 3 Jun.

**Savannah Sparrow:** max 193 IJC 15 Jun; 16 Sullivanville Dam CHEM 3 Jun.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** max 7 IJC 15 Jun, low; 2 Arnot Forest TOMP 1 Jun.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** max 15 IJC 15 Jun, high; 10 Ithaca 12 Jun.

**White-throated Sparrow:** 6 IJC 15 Jun.

**Bobolink:** max 232 IJC 15 Jun, low; 30 FLNF 3 Jun.

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** max 340 Horseheads 29 Aug; 316 IJC 15 Jun.

**Orchard Oriole:** max 4 Sheldrake 11 Jul, high; Pine City 4 Jul.

**Purple Finch:** max 41 IJC 15 Jun, high; 7 KH 24 Jul.

**House Finch:** max 133 IJC 15 Jun, high; 11 KH 27 Jul.

**PINE SISKIN:** max 3 KH 11 Aug, high; 2 KH 23 Jul; arr Summerhill 3 Aug (MY), early.

**House Sparrow:** max 483 IJC 15 Jun, low.

## REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

**PEG BURNETT**

2 Ayers Street, Binghamton NY 13905

**ERIC SULLIVAN**

42 Patricia Street, Binghamton NY 13905

Some birders felt that summer passed over us this year, going from spring right into fall. While good species diversity was reported, overall numbers of individuals were down.

June's daily average temperature was 64.1°F, about average. The high of 85° occurred on 10 June and the low of 43° on 4 June. July's daily average of 64.7° was 4.5° cooler than normal. July's high temperature was only 80° on 30 July, while a low of 49° occurred on 6, 8 and 20 July. July had 26 days with below average temperatures, 13 of them at least 6-11° cooler than normal. August's daily average temperature of 65.0° was 2.2° below normal. The high was 83° on 9 August and the low was 44° on 21 August. There were nine days that the temperature was at least 6-11° cooler than normal.

The wet spring continued into early summer, with June's total precipitation of 4.68" being 1.08" greater than normal. July was about average with 3.76" and August was about an inch less than normal with 2.46". A fast moving thunderstorm moved through the Region on 12 June. Wind gusts up to 43 mph downed trees in the town of Maine, Broome County, as well as areas in Chenango, Delaware, Otsego and Tioga counties.

Waterfowl numbers were less than average, with low counts reported for both Hooded and Common mergansers. An early Snow Goose was at Upper Lisle, Broome County on 28 August. Wading birds provided two more uncommon sightings, with an American Bittern seen in Waverly and a Black-crowned Night-Heron at Brick Pond in Owego, both Tioga County. Other highlights of wetland species were single sightings of Virginia Rail and Common Moorhen.

Hawks had average to low reports as well. Notably absent were reports for Northern Goshawk, for the third consecutive summer, and Red-shouldered Hawk, the first summer missed in at least the last 11 years. A juvenile Peregrine Falcon was confirmed on 13 June on a ledge near where the adult birds had their nest. The nest was placed behind a large concrete crest adorning the upper reaches of the Security Mutual Building in downtown Binghamton. This is perhaps the most significant successful breeding record this Region has ever had.

Jon Weeks's discovery of a Caspian Tern at Dorchester Park near Whitney Point on 25 July was only the Region's second summer report. Few reports were received for owls. Eastern Screech-Owl and Great Horned Owl were the only ones reported. Common Nighthawks continue with declining numbers. Tom Salo wrote, "the river bank near Edmeston, Otsego County that collapsed last May from heavy rains after nesting had started has good numbers of Bank Swallows" this summer.

Our Region was touched by the West Nile Virus this summer, along with all other Regions in the state. At least two dead American Crows in Binghamton tested positive for the virus.

Several reports of Common Raven were impressive from Broome, Chenango and Tioga Counties. Good species diversity was reported for passerines, but low numbers of individuals was the consensus among many birders this season. A Mourning Warbler present from the start of the season to at least 7 July in the town of Dickinson, Broome County was unusual. Some of the more noteworthy warbler species seen included "Lawrence's", Northern Parula, **Kentucky**, Hooded and **Yellow-breasted Chat**.

Rounding out the rarities this summer were a **Dickcissel** seen by Dan Watkins on 19 June on Webb Road in the Town of Binghamton and an **Orchard Oriole** seen by Jon Weeks on 13 July on Hyde Street in the Town of Barker, both Broome County. Dickcissel was last reported in the summer of 1988 and Orchard Oriole was last reported the summer of 1985 in our Region.

While the cooler, wet early summer played a large role in the lower number of birds seen during the period, another contributing factor was fewer reports received. Though this was the first summer of Atlas 2000, none of that data was received for this report.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Cutler Baldwin, Jeanette Baldwin, Chris Barnes, Martin Borko, Peg Burnett, Robert Grosek, Erin Hewett (EHw), Spencer Hunt, Sara Kinch, Gail Kirch, Margaret Layton, Andy Mason (Oneonta Breeding Bird Survey), Evelyn Mead, George Mead, Naturalists' Club of Broome County, Rita Pantle, Robert Pantle, Marie Petuh, Tom Salo (Laurens Breeding Bird Survey), Eric Sullivan (Corbettsville Breeding Bird Survey), Tioga Bird Club, Fred von Mechow, Dan Watkins (DWa), Donald Weber, Joanne Weber, Joel Weeks, Jon Weeks (JW), Anne Whitaker, Don Windsor, Colleen Wolpert, Irene Wright

## ABBREVIATIONS

BUNP – Binghamton University Nature Preserve, Vestal BROO; BPd – Boland Pd, Chenango Bridge BROO; BrPd – Brick Pd, Owego TIOG; DP – Dorchester Park, Triangle BROO; GyL – Goodyear L, OTSE; JC – Johnson City, BROO; PaRd – Parsons Rd, Chenango Forks BROO; REEC – Rogers Environmental Education Center, Sherburne, CHEN; RTP – Round Top Park, Endicott BROO; WeB – West Burlington, OTSE; WPR – Whitney Point Reservoir and nearby area, BROO; UL – Upper Lisle Park, BROO.

## LOONS – DUCKS

**Pied-billed Grebe:** juv Mirror L Owego 1 Aug.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** DP 29 Aug.  
**Am. Bittern:** on various ponds Talmadge Hill Rd east of Waverly TIOG all Aug (TBC).

**Great Blue Heron:** nesting confirmed T Burlington (TS).

**Great Egret:** arr 2 Apalachin Marsh 17 Jul (DWa); Greenwoods Conservancy T Burlington after 8 Aug (TS); occasional Portlandville OTSE Aug; Stamford DELA 11 Aug (AM); 4 other BROO and TIOG reports Jul, Aug; above average.

**Green Heron:** common BROO, TIOG thru; also T Pittsfield and GyL OTSE thru; 5 Portlandville 31 Jul (IW); max 9 BrPd and Mirror L Owego 30 Aug.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** TIOG 31 Aug (JB), fifth summer since 1990, uncommon.

**Turkey Vulture:** up to 6 frequenting Pharsalia Blowdown area CHEN early Aug (DW); max 30-40 GyL occasionally Jul (IW).

**Mute Swan:** 2 BROO reports, average.

**Snow Goose:** UL 28 Aug (JW), early.

**Canada Goose:** max 72 Otsiningo P Binghamton 6 Aug.

**Wood Duck:** max 40 BPd 21 Jul (MP).

**Am. Black Duck:** few scattered reports.

**Hooded Merganser:** CHEN thru; 1- 2 WeB, scarce.

**Com. Merganser:** nesting at REEC; few Binghamton area reports; max 12 Port Dickinson P BROO 16 Aug;

GyL 4 Jun; no others, lower numbers.

## HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** Norwich 9 Jul; Portlandville 28 Aug.; TIOG thru.

**Bald Eagle:** 2 ad WPR Jun, Jul (JW); possible 2nd yr bird WPR 24 Jul (MP); GyL 28 Aug (IW); 3 ad T Hancock DELA 31 Aug (ES); TIOG each month.

**N. Harrier:** Lisle BROO 24 Jul, 13 Aug; several WeB area thru, though "fewer

than previous years"(TS); TIOG thru; only reports.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** several BROO reports; 2 CHEN reports Aug; TIOG thru; WeB 27 Aug, uncommon.

**Cooper's Hawk:** 5 reports BROO; OBBS 11 Jun; Norwich 20 Jun; Willet CORT 8 July; several WeB late Aug, "one eating carrion on side of rd" (TS); TIOG thru; good numbers.

**N. Goshawk:** none reported; last summer report 1997.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** no reports, first summer missed in at least 11 years.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** common BROO, TIOG; imm found dead Pharsalia CHEN "body still warm, intestinal roundworms still active" (DW); few reported elsewhere.

**Am. Kestrel:** max 5 between Lisle and UL BROO 8 Jul; pair Lisle 24 Jul.

**Peregrine Falcon:** breeding confirmed downtown Binghamton.

**Ring-necked Pheasant:** TIOG thru, no other reports.

**Ruffed Grouse:** 4 reports; low.

**Wild Turkey:** downy y WeB mid-Aug (TS); several widespread reports.

**Virginia Rail:** Apalachin Marsh TIOG 17 Jul (DWa); only report.

**Com. Moorhen:** 2 ad BPd 21 Jul (MP); only report.

**Am. Coot:** TIOG thru.

**Killdeer:** max 15 Mirror L Owego 30 Aug.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** TIOG each month.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** 2 ad + 1 y Choconut Center BROO (MP); max 4 T Union BROO 3 Jun; Chenango R Norwich thru; GyL occasional thru; TIOG thru.

**Upland Sandpiper:** 2 Edwards Hill Rd Lisle BROO 6 Aug (JW), same area as previous summers; no other reports.

**Com. Snipe:** "male displaying" WeB "into Jul" (TS); only report.

**Am. Woodcock:** TIOG thru; no other reports.



**Bonaparte's Gull:** DP 10 Aug (MP), uncommon.  
**Ring-billed Gull:** Norwich 23 Aug, "chased by crow"(DW).  
**Herring Gull:** TIOG thru; a few BROO.  
**CASPIAN TERN:** DP 25 July (JW), 2nd Regional summer record.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** WPR 7 Jun; Windsor 23 Jun on CBBS; WeB 8 Jul, seen for several days (TS); Waterman Center Apalachin TIOG 11 Jul; T Maine BROO 18 Jul (MP); T Barker BROO 21 Jul (JW); TIOG thru.  
**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Stamford DELA 6 Aug (AM); TIOG no date (RP); scarce.  
**Eastern Screech-Owl:** WeB 31 Aug; TIOG thru.  
**Great Horned Owl:** Apalachin TIOG 16 Jun; other TIOG sites thru.  
**Com. Nighthawk:** Binghamton 3 Jun; 2 JC, 1 Endicott BROO 13 Aug (MP); UL 28 Aug; max 10 Binghamton 15 Aug (JR); TIOG thru; not many reports.  
**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** TIOG thru, max 2 BrPd; Chenango Forks thru; not as many reports as usual.  
**Hairy Woodpecker:** 2 at nest hole UL 11 Jun.  
**N. Flicker:** 2 at nest hole T Maine BROO 19 Jun.  
**Pileated Woodpecker:** pair WeB 17 Jun; few reports.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**E. Wood-Pewee:** max 8 BROO 5 Jul; low numbers.  
**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Vestal 19 Aug banded (GK); TIOG 30 Aug (R&RP); uncommon.  
**Alder Flycatcher:** CHEN, BROO Jun and Jul; low numbers.  
**Willow Flycatcher:** 2 OTSE 11 Jun; WPR 24 Jul.  
**"Traill's Flycatcher":** banded Vestal 13 Aug (GK).  
**Least Flycatcher:** max 5 OTSE 1 Jun.

**E. Phoebe:** max 5 OTSE 11 Jun.  
**Great Crested Flycatcher:** seen regularly; low numbers.  
**E. Kingbird:** max 5 OTSE 11 Jun.  
**Yellow-throated Vireo:** several reports; max 3 OBBS 11 Jun.  
**Warbling Vireo:** max 7 OBBS 11 Jun.  
**Philadelphia Vireo:** JC 31 Aug (MP).  
**Red-eyed Vireo:** max 16 OBBS 11 Jun.  
**Fish Crow:** TIOG; only report.  
**Com. Raven:** CHEN 29 Jun, 5 Jul; 5 BROO 18 Jun; TIOG thru; good count.  
**Purple Martin:** 6 BROO 22 Jul; max 8 TIOG 23 Jul.  
**Tree Swallow:** regular reports, low numbers; last BROO 13 Aug.  
**N. Rough-winged Swallow:** uncommon; BROO 28 Jun; 4 WPR 8 Jul.  
**Bank Swallow:** good numbers in bank near Edmeston OTSE.  
**Cliff Swallow:** 12 BROO 14 Jun, active nest site.  
**Barn Swallow:** 8 BrPd 30 Aug; good numbers.  
**Tufted Titmouse:** multiple reports; low numbers.  
**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** several in state forests in OTSE; only report.  
**White-breasted Nuthatch:** multiple reports; low numbers.  
**Brown Creeper:** BROO 17 Jul; BROO 31 Aug; uncommon.  
**Carolina Wren:** several reports; last BROO 26 Aug.  
**House Wren:** max 8 OTSE 11 Jun.  
**Winter Wren:** CHEN, OTSE; 2 BROO 1 Aug.  
**Marsh Wren:** uncommon; 3 BPD 21 Jul.  
**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** TIOG 1 Jul; BROO 16 Aug.  
**E. Bluebird:** seen regularly, low numbers.  
**Veery:** seen regularly, low numbers.  
**Swainson's Thrush:** BROO 3 Jun; BROO 18 Aug, banded.  
**Hermit Thrush:** seen regularly Jun and Jul; low numbers.

**Wood Thrush:** last BROO 14 Aug.  
**N. Mockingbird:** BROO 1 Jul; only report.  
**Brown Thrasher:** uncommon; last BROO 13 Aug.  
**European Starling:** 400+ BROO 16 Aug.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** max 6 WPR 8 Jul.  
**"Lawrence's" Warbler:** Ben King Rd east of Smithboro TIOG 30 Jun, 1 Jul (JB, R&RP).  
**Nashville Warbler:** imm BROO 7 Aug.  
**N. Parula:** BROO 11 Jun; only report.  
**Yellow Warbler:** max 27 OTSE 11 Jun; last RTP 26 Aug.  
**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** last RtP 26 Aug.  
**Magnolia Warbler:** RTP 26 Aug, fall plumage.  
**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** low numbers; OTSE common in good habitat.  
**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** seen regularly; good numbers.  
**Black-throated Green Warbler:** 4 BROO 5 Jul; BROO 27 Aug.  
**Blackburnian Warbler:** OTSE 11 Jun.  
**Pine Warbler:** CHEN 4 Aug; 2 RTP 26 Aug.  
**Prairie Warbler:** BROO 1 Jul.  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** imm BROO 7 Aug.  
**Black-and-white Warbler:** BROO 28 Aug; uncommon.  
**Am. Redstart:** common in good habitat; pair RTP 26 Aug.  
**Ovenbird:** 2 BROO 31 Aug.  
**N. Waterthrush:** pair OTSE 17 Jun.  
**Louisiana Waterthrush:** 2 PaRd 14 Jun.  
**KENTUCKY WARBLER:** BROO 16 Jun (JW).  
**Mourning Warbler:** last BROO 7 Jul; OTSE present in good habitat.  
**Com. Yellowthroat:** max 34 OTSE 11 Jun.  
**Hooded Warbler:** BROO 8 Jul (JW);

RTP 26 Aug (SK).  
**Wilson's Warbler:** 2 banded Vestal (GK); BROO 21 Aug.  
**Canada Warbler:** PaRd 14 Jun; TIOG 26 Jul.  
**Yellow-breasted Chat:** BROO 4 Jun (J&JW).

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** low numbers; last BROO 18 Jul.  
**E. Towhee:** low; 3 BROO 31 Aug.  
**Chipping Sparrow:** max 10 BROO 3 and 17 Jul.  
**Field Sparrow:** max 10 BROO 1 Jul.  
**Vesper Sparrow:** TIOG; BROO 10 Jun.  
**Savannah Sparrow:** max 10 BROO 16 Jun.  
**Grasshopper Sparrow:** BROO 8 Jun; CHEN 24 Jun; WPR 8 Jul.  
**Lincoln's Sparrow:** TIOG 26 Jul; 2 TIOG 30 Aug.  
**Song Sparrow:** max 30 OTSE 11 Jun.  
**Swamp Sparrow:** max 7 BPd 10 Jul.  
**White-throated Sparrow:** CHEN, TIOG only.  
**Dark-eyed Junco:** common; low numbers.  
**N. Cardinal:** common; low numbers OTSE.  
**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** common Jun and Jul; BROO 31 Aug.  
**Indigo Bunting:** common Jun and Jul; last 27 Aug.  
**DICKCISSEL:** BROO 19 Jun (DWa).  
**Bobolink:** heard in 8 fields TIOG 4 Jun; 30+ WPR 8 Jul; 2 OTSE 12 Aug.  
**E. Meadowlark:** last BROO 6 Aug; good numbers OTSE "late mowing seems to have helped" (TS).  
**ORCHARD ORIOLE:** 13 Jun Barker BROO (JW).  
**Baltimore Oriole:** BROO 31 Aug.  
**Purple Finch:** PaRd 14 Jun; 2 BROO 18 Aug.

Oldcards@juno.com

## REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

BILL PURCELL

281 Baum Road, Hastings NY 13076

The season was considered to be cool and wet, but the 9.53" of rain recorded at the Syracuse Airport for the three-month period was 1.58" below average. June had an average temperature of 65.6°F, 0.3° above normal, and 4.46" of rain, 0.67" above normal. July was the coolest ever recorded in Syracuse, with an average temperature of 67.1° (-3.1°) and with 2.73" of rain (-1.08"). August's average temperature was 68.2° (-0.2°), with 2.34" of rain (-1.17").

It was a fine year for cone, fruit and seed production. Pine, spruce and hemlock all had a good supply of cones, with white pine and white spruce branches weighted down by the heavy crop in some areas. Maples and ash had a lot of fruit, oaks produced a very good acorn crop and gray birch had a lot of catkins. The seed and berry crops were also good.

Common Loons were found on the Lower Salmon River Reservoir in the Tug Hill in June and July but breeding could not be confirmed. American Bitterns were common in several wetlands in Oswego County and Least Bitterns were found in the large marshes across the Region, but verifying breeding for either of these secretive species proved difficult. Black-crowned Night-Heron was found in more areas than normal, although the August sightings may have been dispersals from breeding colonies outside the Region. There were no reports of night-herons at Snake Swamp in Oswego this year.

Arthur Brooks found an unfledged Turkey Vulture in Dewitt and a photo was sent to Dorothy Crumb. This is only the third record of breeding, although vultures are certainly nesting across the Region. New Osprey nests continue to be reported each year and several immature Bald Eagles floating along Lake Ontario may be prospecting for new nest sites. Merlins were again found at the east end of Stillwater where they nested in 1999.

Migrant dabbling duck numbers were very low through the end of the season; Gadwall, American Wigeon and Northern Pintail were missed. The spring and early summer rains seemed to have had a negative effect on some waterfowl and rail species in Utica Marsh where Matt Perry reported there was little in the way of the usual family activities of Virginia Rail and Sora. The last shorebirds going north were found through the first week of June, but the return flight was poor due to high water at many sites. The official recording station at the Syracuse Airport received only 86% of the usual precipitation for the season, but many areas in the Region did see a lot of rain and ponds remained full through August with shorebird numbers suffering as a result. Delta Lake, the most productive shorebird site in recent years, had been drawn down only slightly as the season ended. Also, with the Atlas project underway, some observers spent July and even part of August documenting breeding birds rather than seeking out migrants as they would have in other years.

Black Tern numbers were low during the breeding season and none were reported from Sandy Pond during the August migration. In Durhamville, Mark and Beth Taylor reported a **White-winged Dove** at their feeder on 11 June. It was verified by Brenda Best for a first Regional record. Many observers got to see the dove as it stayed for about four days. There was a good count of Yellow-billed Cuckoos from Howland Island and both cuckoos were well reported again this year.

Jeanne Ryan heard a Short-eared Owl while taking an evening walk near her home in Cazenovia and over the next few days she and Dorothy Crumb observed a pair bringing food to a nest site for the first Regional breeding record. Jim D'Angelo of the Sterling Nature Center had a Barn Owl at his home in Victory on several occasions during July and August, although no roost or nest site was ever found. There were no reports of Red-headed Woodpecker from known breeding areas this season.

Passerines seemed to have a good breeding year. There was some Tree Swallow loss in early June during a short cold spell, but the cool July did not seem to affect the availability of caterpillars or flying insects which were being stuffed into young birds' mouths everywhere. This comment came from Matt Perry's report: "The excessive rainfall from spring through early summer had its effects on the local bird populations. Many songbirds seemed to benefit from an abundant insect population brought on by the wet conditions. Ground and near-ground nesting passerines also seemed to benefit from the lush, healthy forest understory that the rains made possible. Coming on the heels of two successive summers of drought, this summer's relative abundance of bird song and activity was a very refreshing change."

Perry documented these species feeding cowbirds: Blue-headed Vireo, 2 Red-eyed Vireos, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, several Common Yellowthroats and several Song Sparrows. Passerine highlights during the breeding season included Pine Warbler, which was in many more locations than during the last Atlas project, and four pairs of Orchard Orioles reported breeding this season, with the possibility of an expanding population in the old Erie Canal corridor.

Fall warbler migration was quite slow until the last few days of August. Grasshopper Sparrows continue to do well at landfill caps and, at another site, re-nested after the field was cut in late May. Henslow's Sparrows remain elusive, with reports only from the one location in Mexico. No Pine Siskins or Evening Grosbeaks were reported over the summer, a few Red Crossbills were found in Herkimer County and there were two sightings of White-winged Crossbills in traditional irruption areas.

There was a total of 187 species reported for the season, somewhat on the low side. Highlights were Stilt Sandpiper, Little Gull, **White-winged Dove**, **Barn Owl**, breeding **Short-eared Owl** and Orchard Oriole.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Betty Armbruster, Sue Boettger, Joseph Brin, Arthur Brooks, Bernie Carr, Lee Chamberlaine, Dorothy W. Crumb, Jim D'Angelo, Bill Gruenbaum, Barbara Herrgesell, Gene Huggins, Bettye Hughes, Andy Leahy, Kevin McGann, Margaret Napoleon, David Nash, Matt Perry, Bill Purcell, Marge Rusk, Jeanne Ryan, Tom Salo, Maureen Staloff, Chris Tessaglia-Hymes, Matt Young.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Bvllc – Baldwinsville; CM – Clay Marsh; DH – Derby Hill; DL – Delta Lake; HIWMA – Howland Island WMA; OneiL – Oneida Lake; OnonL – Onondaga Lake; SFWS – Spring Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, Paris; SPd – Sandy Pond; SSSP – Selkirk Shores State Park; SVB – Sylvan and Verona Beach; Syr – Syracuse; TRWMA – Three Rivers WMA; UM – Utica Marsh.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** 2 alt Lower Salmon River Res 2 Jul, no breeding documented.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** breeding UM and W Monroe.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** nesting mainland swamp OneiL; max 400 OneiL 3 Aug.

**Am. Bittern:** found at 5 sites W Monroe and Hastings.

**Least Bittern:** reports from Bvllc, CM, HIWMA, SPd, UM.

**Great Egret:** arr Clay 27 Jul; reported from 10+ sites Aug including Paris and W Winfield where unusual; only 2 DL where more numerous in recent years.

**Green Heron:** max 20 CM 4 Aug.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** UM 9 Aug; 2-3 Willow Bay OnonL end of Aug; ad + imm UM 28 Aug.

**Turkey Vulture:** nest with y Dewitt in Jul, first confirmed breeding since early 1980s.

**Mute Swan:** pair on nest Verona Jun.

**Am. Black Duck:** none east end Stillwater Res early Jul where Mallards are common.

**Blue-winged Teal:** 4 Paris 15 Aug.

**Green-winged Teal:** arr UM 20 Aug.

**Hooded Merganser:** reports of y at 5

sites.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Cleveland 3 Aug, unusual in summer.

### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** new nests Altmar, Van Buren, Lysander; established nests prospering.

**Bald Eagle:** occasional sightings Seneca R may be related to Cross L pair; regular sightings along L Ontario, possibly from Salmon R or birds attempting to establish new territory.

**N. Harrier:** breeding Peterboro, Sullivan; Nelson Swamp 3 Jun; Beaver R HERK in Jul.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** breeding 6th consecutive year Hamilton College.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** active nest lost in high winds SFWS 2 Jun.

**Merlin:** pair present Stillwater Res early Jul in 1999 breeding area.

**Ruffed Grouse:** family groups common Tug Hill and Adirondacks.

**Virginia Rail:** 2 CM 2 Aug.

**Sora:** CM 14 Jun; Fulton 7 Jun.

**Com. Moorhen:** SSSP 7 Jun; breeding W Monroe, Phoenix, UM.

**Am. Coot:** last UM 5 Jun.

**Black-bellied Plover:** SPd 20 Aug; only report.

**Semipalmated Plover:** arr SVB 26 Jul; max 5 SPd 26 Aug.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** arr 22 Jul; only 3 reports of 5 birds.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr Sullivan 2 Jul.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** arr Sterling 18 Jul; max 5 WM 30 Jul.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** max 5 SPd 11 Aug.

**Upland Sandpiper:** ad with y Sullivan 8 Jul; 3 or more Silk Rd landfill cap Fulton in Jun, display noted.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** SPd 12 Aug.

**Red Knot:** SPd 24-26 Aug.

**Sanderling:** last 3 SPd 7 Jun; max 16 SPd 20 Aug.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** last 8 SPd 7 Jun; arr SVB 28 Jul; max 20 SPd 20 Aug.

**Least Sandpiper:** arr Sullivan 4 Jul; max 4 SPd 11 Aug.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** SPd 20 Aug.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr WM 30 Jul.

**Dunlin:** last 3 SPd 7 Jun.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** arr Sullivan 2 Jul; only report.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** last 3 Schroepel 5 Jun; arr 4 Sullivan 2 Jul.

**Com. Snipe:** flight displays Remsen, Stueben, East Floyd in Jun; 4 displaying Breaver R 2 Jul.

**Little Gull:** ad SPd 26 Aug.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** arr SVB 13 Jul; max 62 SPd 26 Aug.

**Caspian Tern:** max 57 SPd 26 Aug.

**Com. Tern:** max 26 SPd 26 Aug.

**Black Tern:** max only 3 SSSP 7 Jun.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

##### WHITE-WINGED DOVE:

Durhamville 11-15 Jun (BB, mob) (NYSARC), first Regional record.

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** 21 reported.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** max 8 HIWMA 5 Jun (CT), very high count; 7 other reports.

**BARN OWL:** sporadic T Victory after 4 Jul (JD); last known breeding in 1981.

**E. Screech Owl:** calling many areas end of Aug.

**Barred Owl:** 2 WM 24 Jun; 3 imm with ad New Haven 7 Jul; Boylston 22 Jul.

**SHORT-EARED OWL:** pair bringing food to young Cazenovia 28 Jun; first confirmed breeding for Region (JR, DC); CM 30 Aug, early migrant.

**Com. Nighthawk:** pair Ilion after year's absence; max 101 Syr 27 Aug; 465 total Syr 12-31 Aug.

**Whip-poor-will:** 3-4 calling Constantia Jun.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Lysander 23 Jun, present about a week; Pompey 17 Jul.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Nine Mile Pt 2 Jun; Salisbury 16 Jun; TRWMA 17-18 Jun, late migrant; arr SFWS 2 Aug, very early.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Nine Mile Pt 2 Jun; arr Verona 24 Aug.

**Acadian Flycatcher:** 2-3 pairs Whiskey Hollow; also present Camillus and Hannibal.

**Blue-headed Vireo:** building nest HIWMA 4 Jun; TRWMA 24 Jun; unusual sites.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** arr DL 28 Aug.

**Fish Crow:** singles Liverpool 1-25 Jun.

**Com. Raven:** Hastings 7 Jun; 3 Georgetown 11 Jun, nesting on cell tower.

**Purple Martin:** last 3 Van Buren 28 Aug.

**Tree Swallow:** max 400 Clay 4 Aug.

**N. Rough-winged Swallow:** max 11 Van Buren 28 Aug.

**Bank Swallow:** 515 nest holes OnonL 29 Jul, birds had already departed; max 80 DH 16 Jul.

**Cliff Swallow:** max 100 Lysander 28 Aug.

**Barn Swallow:** pair nesting on ferry traveling 7 mi length of Stillwater Res

(TS); max 1500 CM 24 Aug.

**Tufted Titmouse:** birds in Taberg and northern W Monroe pushing into higher elevations.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** no fall migration noted.

**Carolina Wren:** FL Nine Mile Pt 2 Jul; Bville 23 Jun; Syr 1 Jul; Camillus 1 Jul.

**Winter Wren:** HIWMA 5 Jun, late migrant.

**Sedge Wren:** 3-4 DH thru Jun.

**Marsh Wren:** low numbers UM and scarce at smaller wetlands where found some years.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** pair HIWMA 4 Jun, lower elevation than usual.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** arr DL 28 Aug.

**E. Bluebird:** breeding DH; normally cannot compete with large numbers of Tree Swallows along L Ontario.

#### WARBLERS

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** males singing Manlius and Whiskey Hollow, unusual sites.

**Pine Warbler:** now present many areas not found in old Atlas; singing in red pine plantation Central Square.

**Prairie Warbler:** 4 Georgetown 3 Jun; 3 Dewitt 21 Jun, no breeding evidence.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** 40 Nine Mile Pt 2

Jun; last 4 Jun.

**Cerulean Warbler:** 25+ males HIWMA 5 Jun.

**N. Waterthrush:** Central Square 11 Jul, presumed migrant.

**Wilson's Warbler:** arr SVB 17 Aug, early; SPd 26 Aug.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** reported at 7 sites, 3 of them landfill caps; re-nested Hastings after field cut.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** only reported from Mexico site.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** 4 Nine Mile Pt 2 Jun, late; Moss L 27 Jul, only breeding area report.

**White-throated Sparrow:** SPd 26 Aug, early migrant.

**Bobolink:** max 140 Pompey 6 Aug.

**E. Meadowlark:** singing Beaver R 3 Jul.

**Com. Grackle:** max 1300 CM 30 Aug.

**Orchard Oriole:** breeding HIWMA, Sullivan; 2 pairs Van Buren.

**Red Crossbill:** 6 Moss L 27 Jul.

**White-winged Crossbill:** Boylston 18 Aug; Fabius 31 Aug.

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## REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

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June was cool, averaging one to two degrees below normal for the Region. Rainfall was excessive, ranging from 1.5" to 2.0" above normal. One half of the days in June were cloudy with some precipitation. Sunny days came on north winds, creating an autumn-like atmosphere. July was worse than June, with fewer sunny days than the average for February. Temperatures were again one to two degrees below normal and rainfall was in excess by 1.5". August began with daily temperatures in the forties. However, after 10 August, the sun came out, temperatures hit the 80s and real summer began. Rainfall in August returned to normal levels. The excessive rain caused water levels to rise to 11" above normal on the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario by the end of July. High water caused many fields and marshes to flood, with both positive and negative results. The shorebird migration was scant at El Dorado Shores, but many species found a sufficient alternative in the flooded and muddy fields of Cape Vincent. Marshes and shorelines that had begun to develop thick grasses during the past five years of low water were flushed out, leaving better habitat for next year's nesting and migration. Hay and timothy harvesting was delayed well into July, allowing many of the grassland species to fledge their young. This was evident in the high numbers of Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink. Vegetation in general was lush, with good berry and cone crops by the end of the period.

Double-crested Cormorant population control continued for the second year on Little Galloo Island, Jefferson County, with egg-oiling by DEC staff. The total number of ground nests with eggs (4301) was somewhat less, possibly due to the human interference from oiling. The result of the oiling was a reduction of nesting success by 97%, with fledged chicks numbering less than 200, mostly from tree nests. DEC staff also took measures to restrict the establishment of new colonies on Gull and Bass islands in the eastern basin of Lake Ontario. On 15 May, 1235 nests were removed from Gull and Bass islands and 131 re-nests removed on two subsequent visits. This resulted in no nests on those islands. Many of these disrupted birds returned to the Little Galloo Island nesting area, where their eggs were oiled. In the St. Lawrence River Valley, cormorants nested for the first time on Bogardus Island, Town of Morristown, St. Lawrence County. Five young were produced from three nests. This is an extension from a nearby colony of 135 nests on McNairn Island across the border in Canadian waters. Cormorant pellet studies from McNairn have indicated that these birds are eating mostly Rock Bass, so fishermen can't really complain. The Great Blue Heron colony on Ironsides Island in the St. Lawrence River, Town of Alexandria, Jefferson County, which had been disrupted in May by an unknown disturbance, was totally empty by the first week in June. This colony had 600 active nests in 1999. On the nearby privately owned



Hemlock Island, an estimated 200-300 Great Blue Heron nests were initiated. The owner, who has a permit, used some harassment measures, resulting in only about 30-40 successful nests.

The pair of Trumpeter Swans at Perch River WMA, Jefferson County, nested for the sixth year in a row, raising four young. Redheads bred successfully at Upper and Lower Lakes WMA, Canton, St. Lawrence County. Henry Armistead found four broods on August 6. Redheads were introduced by DEC in the 1950s, but in the past several years no reports of breeding have been recorded. A new Bald Eagle nest with young was found on Point Peninsula, Jefferson County. This is the second nest in Jefferson County. Of interest to all was a successful nesting in 1999 of a pair of Bald Eagles in the Canadian Channel of the St. Lawrence River on an Osprey nest in full view of boaters from both sides of the River. This pair chose a tree nest on an island near Wellesley Island this year. Bald Eagles were reported along the St. Lawrence River, at Upper and Lower Lakes WMA, Massena and Blake Creek Reservoir in Parishville, St. Lawrence County. This is a major change and bodes well for more nests in the future. In the St. Lawrence River Valley there are now hundreds of White Pines over 60 years of age in state parks and isolated public holdings that are tall enough to attract the Bald Eagle. Stay tuned! This summer Lee Harper banded 588 Common Terns on the St. Lawrence River. This total was good despite many low shoals being flooded. The band is pink, so if anyone sees a tern with a pink band, please notify me and I will pass the information on to Lee.

**Black Tern** studies were conducted by DEC staffers Mandi Walseman and Sandy Muller. At Perch River WMA high water and cold wet weather slowed nest initiation. Of 29 nests, 12 were successful, 16 failed, and the results for one were unknown. Nest success was 44%. Nest estimates were made at Lakeview WMA, Dexter Marsh and Wilson Bay Marsh, all in Jefferson County. Due to difficulty getting to the nests, chick studies were not done. Usually the Black Terns gather at various shoals for pre-migratory staging. This year, due to high water, no such area could be found so there was no overall count of terns at the end of nesting. In general it appeared to be a poor year.

Northern Harriers were found in 35 locations in 30 different Atlas blocks. Most of those reports came from the Perch River Grassland Important Bird Area, due to better coverage in Jefferson County. The vast grasslands of the seven towns in the area also yielded good numbers of Upland Sandpiper, Sedge Wren and Henslow's Sparrow. In reviewing the maps sent in by observers, it was interesting to see the close proximity of these species in certain areas. Henslow's would be singing from the sedges, N. Harriers flying by, and Uppies standing on the wires. If there was tall grass nearby, Sedge Wrens could be heard. Statewide, these species are considered to be endangered or declining but in these vast grasslands of Jefferson County and farther north in the St. Lawrence Valley, they are regular, and in the case of the Northern Harrier, common. The harrier, in fact, is the most common raptor in these areas, with the American Kestrel second and Red-tailed Hawk third.

Positives for the period were better coverage of the two most important Wildlife

Management Areas: Perch River, Jefferson County, and Upper and Lower Lakes in Canton, St. Lawrence County. Negatives for the period were the absence of the usual detailed reports from Lee Chamberlaine and Peter O'Shea who were both ill. Further, there were no reports from the Robert Moses Power Dam, and few people worked in the Adirondacks.

Rarities included Great Egret and Red-breasted Merganser.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BFR – Blake Falls Reservoir T Parishville STLA; CB – Chaumont Barrens T Lyme JEFF; CV – T Cape Vincent JEFF; DM – Dexter Marsh T Brownsville JEFF; ED – El Dorado Shores T Henderson JEFF; FCWMA – French Cr WMA T Clayton JEFF; FD – Fort Drum; HP – Holmes Pt SLR 1 mile east of JCSP; JCSP – Jacques Cartier SP; JEFF – Jefferson Co; LC – Limerick Cedars T Brownville JEFF; LEWI – Lewis Co; LLWMA – Lakeview WMA T Ellisburg JEFF; LOL – Lake Ontario littoral; OBBS – Ogdensburg BBS T Oswegatchie, Morristown, Hammond STLA 4 Jun; PBBS – Philadelphia BBS T Philadelphia, T Antwerp JEFF, T Rossie, T Hammond STLA 5 Jun; PRG – Perch R Grasslands, T Orleans, T Clayton, T Theresa, T Leray, T Brownville, T Lyme, T Hounsfield JEFF; PtPen – Point Peninsula T Lyme JEFF; SH – Sacketts Harbor T Hounsfield JEFF; SLR – St. Lawrence R; STLA – St. Lawrence Co; TThen – T Henderson JEFF; TLou – T Louisville STLA; TMas – T Massena STLA; TMor – T Morristown STLA; ULLWMA – Upper and Lower L WMA, T Canton STLA; WBBS – Wanakena BBS T Fine, T Clifton, T Clare STLA 2 Jun; WBM – Wilson Bay Marsh, CV JEFF; WS – Winthrop Swamp north of Winthrop Rt 420 T Stockholm STLA.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** breeding ULLWMA, Dead Cr Flow, T Clifton STLA, BFR.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** breeding PRWMA, FCWMA, ULLWMA, WS.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** 2000-3000 flying past CV on the SLR from L Ontario 12 Aug, assembling for departure. *Intro* for discussion of

population control efforts this year.

**Great Blue Heron:** active colony north of ULLWMA; Ironsides I colony deserted this year due to unknown disturbance.

**Great Egret:** WS early Jun.

**Canada Goose:** breeding in large numbers on small ponds away from human contact.

**Trumpeter Swan:** pair + 4 y PRWMA.  
**Wood Duck:** broods at WBM, FCWMA, ULLWMA, PRWMA, TLou.  
**Gadwall:** pair farm pd CV; FL PRWMA 26 Aug.  
**Am. Wigeon:** 2 m farm pd CV 12 Jun; 4 ULLWMA 5 Aug.  
**Am Black Duck:** 20 PRWMA 20 Aug; 6 ED 31 Aug.  
**Blue-winged Teal:** FL TMas 11 Jun; farm pd CV 13 Jun; pair farm pd Oak Pt Rd TMor 7 Jun; 14 ULLWMA 7 Aug.  
**N. Shoveler:** 3 m PRWMA 3 Jun; pair PRWMA 10 Jun; pair farm pd Oak Pt Rd TMor 7 Jun; m farm pd CV 7-12 Jun.  
**N. Pintail:** m farm pd CV 7 Jun; 2 ULLWMA 6 Aug.  
**Green-winged Teal:** 8 ULLWMA 6 Aug; PRWMA 26 Aug.  
**Redhead:** 44 including 6 broods of y ULLWMA 6 Aug.  
**Long-tailed Duck:** ad m Sawyers Bay LOL TThen 21 Jul.  
**Hooded Merganser:** 3 ad + 7 y ULLWMA 6 Aug (HA).  
**Red-breasted Merganser:** FL Picton I SLR T Clayton JEFF (BH).

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** FL PRWMA; corner of I81 and Rt 12 T Alexandria JEFF; Wellesley I T Alexandria JEFF; Blind Bay T Hammond STLA, ULLWMA.  
**Bald Eagle:** pair with 2 y PtPen; 2 imm PRWMA 3 Jun; imm HP 12 Jun; pair ULLWMA 6 Jun; pair BFR 6 Jul; pair Patterson Rd TLou 18 Jun.  
**N. Harrier:** 35 reports from 30 Atlas blocks, mostly concentrated in PRG.  
**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** TLou 1 Jun; HP 12 Jun; Village of Potsdam Jul.  
**Cooper's Hawk:** Black Cr Rd T Orleans Jeff 12 Jun; Stoney Pt TThen 28 Jun.  
**N. Goshawk:** 7 nests with y (4 JEFF, 2 STLA, 1 LEWT).  
**Red-shouldered:** ULLWMA 6 Jun; 3 nests with y all JEFF.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** FL Higley Flow SP; T Colton STLA.  
**Red-tailed Hawk:** FY So Canton Rd T Pierrepont STLA; pair T Hammond STLA thru.  
**Am. Kestrel:** FL CV, T Brownsville JEFF; Potsdam; PRWMA; FY TMor.  
**Merlin:** BFR early Jul; ED 31 Aug.  
**Gray Partridge:** 2 pairs with y CV Aug.  
**Ring-necked Pheasant:** FY CV 27 Jul; ULLWMA, Potsdam.  
**Ruffed Grouse:** 14 breeding reports.  
**Wild Turkey:** numerous reports of FL.  
**Com. Moorhen:** FL ULLWMA 6 Aug.  
**Am. Coot:** FL PRWMA 30 Jun (MK).  
**Semipalmated Plover:** 5 ED 31 Aug.  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** 8 wet field CV 18 Jul-4 Aug; 20 wet grassy field Merchant Rd CV 1 Aug.  
**Lesser Yellowlegs:** PRWMA 26 Aug.  
**Solitary Sandpiper:** 2 CV 20-26 Jul.  
**Spotted Sandpiper:** reports from CV, TMor, PRWMA, ED; FL TLou.  
**Upland Sandpiper:** 10 reports from PRG; FL CV 4 Jul; TLou 4 Jun.  
**Sanderling:** 5 ED 31 Aug.  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** muddy field CV 18 Jul; 6 ED 31 Aug.  
**Least Sandpiper:** 9 muddy field CV 18 Jul; 6 Ed 31 Aug.  
**Pectoral Sandpiper:** 8 muddy field CV 18 Jul.  
**Com. Snipe:** plentiful in flooded fields CV; max 40 CV.  
**Am. Woodcock:** max 16 TLou 5 Jun.  
**Bonaparte's Gull:** 3 PRWMA 20 Aug.  
**Caspian Tern:** 1377 nests Little Galloo I (SS).  
**Com. Tern:** 588 y banded from SLR and L Ontario (LH).  
**Black Tern:** max 29 WBM, est nests 15, a 75% decrease since early 1990s; 9 pairs DM; 6 pairs LLWMA, no nests; 9 ad ULLWMA; pair T Pamela Rt 8, 6 mi n of Perch L Rd overpass JEFF 23 Jun.

## PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** CV 25 Jun; Calcium Trail T Leray 21 Jun; Henderson 15 Aug.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** 2 Payne L T Antwerp 14 Jul; Vaadi Rd near DEC tower PRWMA 20 Jun.

**E. Screech Owl:** 3 imm vil CV 22 Jun.

**Great Horned Owl:** FL Barnhart I T Mas.

**Barred Owl:** T Potsdam; BFR.

**Short-eared Owl:** T Lyme; Baggs corners T Hounsfeld, JEFF 29 Aug; Grasslands near LC Jul (GS).

**Com. Nighthawk:** Kelsey Cr T Pamela JEFF.

**Whip poor-will:** abundant in the alvar habitat, CB and LC.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Crystal Springs Rd CV 22 Jun; Burnham Pt SP 10 August CV; FL CV late Aug.

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** FL Henderson JEFF 20 Jun.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** 2 Wanakena T Fine STLA 4 Jun; 4 WBBS 2 Jun; very quiet this year.

**Black-backed Woodpecker:** ad Payne L T Antwerp thru, out of usual range (JR).

## FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Wanakena T Fine 4 Jun; departed CV 22 Aug.

**Alder Flycatcher:** 6 OBBS 4 Jun; FY TLou 3 Jul.

**Willow Flycatcher:** TLou 5 Jun; 2 Calcium Trail T Pamela JEFF 21 Jun.

**Least Flycatcher:** 5 WBBS 2 Jun; FY TLou 11 Jul.

**Gr. Crested Flycatcher:** max 5 CB 18 Jun; FY TLou 22 Jun.

**E. Kingbird:** 8-10 pairs CV Jul; FY TLou 3 Aug.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** singing males 5 points T Theresa JEFF 23, 26 Jun.

**Blue-headed Vireo:** 7 WBBS 2 Jun; Rt 56 TLou 1 Jun.

**Warbling Vireo:** 7 PBBS 5 Jun; FY

TLou 6 Jul.

**Red-eyed Vireo:** 6 CB 18 Jun; max 100 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Com. Raven:** FY WBBS 2 Jun; calling Payne L T Antwerp JEFF 5 Jun; 5 Crystal L T Theresa 23 Jun.

**Horned Lark:** 3 TThen Ayles Rd 28 Jun.

**Purple Martin:** FY in many boxes all along the SLR.

**Tree Swallow:** 17 OBBS 4 Jun, above average.

**Bank Swallow:** 30 FL T Mas 18 Jun.

**Cliff Swallow:** 6 FY Rt 56 TLou 28 Jun.

**Barn Swallow:** 35 combined OBBS 4 Jun and PBBS 5 Jun, above average.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** CV 17 Aug,

**Carolina Wren:** CV thru; Snowshoe Pt TThen 28 Jun; Henderson 17 Jul.

**Winter Wren:** 2 Wanakena T Fine STLA; Wellesley I T Orleans JEFF 12 Jul.

**Sedge Wren:** 7 reports PRG; 1 Lou.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** CV 22 Aug; 3 River Rd CV 30 Aug.

**Veery:** max 22 TLou 12 Jun; 10 WBBS 2 Jun; FY TLou 23 Jun.

**Hermit Thrush:** 3 WBBS 2 Jun; 3 CS 8 Jun.

**N. Mockingbird:** TLou 7 Jun, 6 Jul; Penny Settlement Rd TThen 1 Aug; CV 20 Aug.

**Brown Thrasher:** FY TLou.

## WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** 10 FD; Clayton Center R and Reese Rd both TClayton JEFF 26 Jun; Rt 3 near Scotch Settlement Rd T Rossie STLA 5 Jun.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** 34 singing males FD (JB); Rt 3 Scotch Settlement Rd T Rossie STLA 5 Jun; So Hammond Rd T Hammond STLA 5 Jun.

**Nashville Warbler:** 2 Rt 56 TLou 6 Jun max 5 WBBS 2 Jun; last Dump Rd CV 28 Aug.

**Yellow Warbler:** max 72 combined OBBS 4 Jun and PBBS 5 Jun, new

record high count.

**Chesnut-sided Warbler:** 11 WBBS 2 Jun; 15 TLou.

**Magnolia Warbler:** 5 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** 7 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** 6 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** 4 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Pine Warbler:** 2 Washington P T Lorraine JEFF 17 Jul; 3 Rt 56 TLou 17 Jul; max 6 JCSP 6 Jun; last CV 21 Aug.

**Prairie Warbler:** CB 18 Jun.

**Cerulean Warbler:** Rt 3 T Rossie STLA 5 Jun; Harts Flat Rd T Theresa JEFF 26 Jun.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** 5 CB 18 Jun; 6 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Am. Redstart:** max 13 WBBS 2 Jun.

**Ovenbird:** 17 WBBS 2 Jun; 18 TLou 23 Jul.

**Com. Yellowthroat:** 63 combined OBBS 4 Jun and PBBS 5 Jun.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** 2 pairs T Parishville STLA Jul; 6 TLou 1 Jun.

**E. Towhee:** 11 PBBS 5 Jun; 11 CB 18 Jun.

**Chipping Sparrow:** FY from many areas in JEFF and STLA.

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** singing m Middle Rd 2.8 mi from Doane Rd JEFF

29 Jun; singing m Worden Rd 1 mi north of RT 37 T Mor, 4-6 Jun.

**Field Sparrow:** 7 PBBS 5 Jun.

**Vesper Sparrow:** 7 reports from PRG.

**Savannah Sparrow:** 12 Rt 56 TLou 1 Jun 25; combined with OBBS 4 Jun and PBBS 5 Jun, above average.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** 7 locations PRG mostly T Clayton and T Orleans; FY Hen 24 Jun.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** 22 reports of 43 individuals from PRG (NL).

**N. Cardinal:** 20 TLou 18 Jun; FL CV; reports from T Potsdam, T Parishville STLA; Beaver Falls LEWI 30 Jul.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 11 TLou 3 Jun; common in mixed woods-grassland habitats.

**Indigo Bunting:** 5 PBBS 5 Jun.

**Bobolink:** 113 combined OBBS 4 Jun and PBBS 5 Jun, new high.

**E. Meadowlark:** 49 combined OBBS 4 Jun and PBBS 5 Jun, new high.

**Baltimore Oriole:** FY from many reporters.

**Purple Finch:** 8 at feeder Rt 56 TLou 20 Jul.

**House Finch:** TMor, TLou, CV; very scarce otherwise.

**Evening Grosbeak:** 3 Rt 56 TLou 1 Jun; only report.

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## REGION 7 – ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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The wet conditions of spring extended into summer and the first field season of Atlas 2000. The last official day of Spring on 20 June was a lovely day, with a high of 78°F, but 24 June was actually the first day in 24 days with no rain. Rains extended into July, and by mid-month Lake Champlain still stood at a relatively high 96.6'. Not until 23-25 July did the Region enjoy the best stretch of Summer '00, with temperatures reaching 83° in the Champlain lowlands at Ticonderoga and Westport and the water level at 96.32', still a foot and a half above the Drought of '99 level. Rainfall finally diminished in August, with just 3.67" falling during the month (compared to a normal 4.06"), although it still managed to rain on 13 of the 31 days. The heaviest storm brought less than an inch of rain on 16 August and the coldest day on the 18th saw thermometers dip to 45° at lower elevations. By season's end, annual precipitation was still running more than 5" higher than usual at 28.12". (Normal is 22.70".) In spite of these soggy conditions, more than 100 observers set out to provide coverage in about half of the 182 Atlas Squares (or 690 Blocks) in Region 7.

By midsummer it was obvious that a bumper crop of wild foods was forming: berries, fruits, nuts and – most importantly perhaps – cones. Cedars, firs, pines, spruces and tamaracks were loaded to the point of being top-heavy. Not unexpectedly, David Fiske found White-winged Crossbills feeding young near Blue Ridge (Essex County) during July, and large numbers of singing males were reported across Essex, Franklin and Hamilton counties. By season's end, males seemed to move from treetop singing perches to the mid-level of spruces and females disappeared, suggesting nests with eggs or young. During this first nesting, White-winged Crossbills were seen feeding on tamarack (eastern larch) and white spruce. Only a few Red Crossbills were reported, but conditions suggest that winter might bring an invasion of both species, similar to the great crossbill nesting of 1984-85 during the first Atlas. Red-breasted Nuthatches and other conifer specialists also seemed to have a good summer, but Pine Siskins were still notable mostly by their absence. Given the cone crop, this may change by winter and siskins join the crossbills by early '01. Atlas observers have been urged to visit boreal forests and record all sightings.

West Nile virus reached the Region. Among birds testing positive were an American Crow in Tupper Lake, Blue Jays in Jay (!), Schroon and Wilmington, a young American Robin in Westport and Yellow-rumped Warbler in Altamont. In Essex County alone, 146 ill or dead birds were reported, and of 56 sent for testing 5 have turned up positive for the virus, the latest a Sharp-shinned Hawk in Elizabethtown 7 September. The young robin points to infection by local mosquitoes, and observers are urged to take every precaution against bites.

By season's end, Notable Species Forms had been submitted for Pied-billed Grebe, American Bittern, Northern Harrier, Upland Sandpiper, Three-toed Woodpecker, Bicknell's Thrush, Tennessee Warbler, "Yellow" Palm Warbler and Clay-colored Sparrow. Forms were also submitted for Great Egret, Common and Black terns, Carolina Wren and "Lawrence's" Warbler.

Three-toed Woodpeckers were found at Bloomingdale Bog, Oseetah Lake and Powley Place, for a strong initial showing, while singing male **Clay-colored Sparrows** were located along the Heart Lake Road and near Whallonsburg. **Great Egrets** nested for the first time on the Four Brothers, and the "**Lawrence's**" **Warbler** hybrid was in the Town of Bombay, Franklin County, sharing a stretch of Reardon Road with a pair of Golden-winged Warblers.

On 10 June, a Red Fox was found on Island "A" (2.3 acres) of Four Brothers, and another was on Island "B" (2.4 acres) the same day, both presumed to have come out on the ice earlier in the year. Their presence discouraged colonial waterbird nesting on those islets, allowing the vegetation a year to recover, especially young basswoods and other saplings used by egrets and night-herons. Glossy Ibis were absent, but other waterbirds moved to the other two islands, and on 10 June there were 4 adult **Great Egrets** on Island "D". Two nests with eggs were found on 25 June, and 4 almost fully-fledged nestlings from 2 nests were banded 11 August. Other waterbirds banded at Four Brothers included 29 Double-crested Cormorants, 7 Cattle Egrets, 63 Black-crowned Night-Herons, 1015 Ring-billed Gulls (990 chicks and 25 color-banded adults) and 73 Herring Gulls. A total of 1346 cormorant nests was counted, down from 1372 last year, which in turn was down from 1394 in 1998. Great Blue Herons had 21 nests, Cattle Egrets 15 and Black-crowned Night-Herons 157 (down from last year's record 227, but still excellent). The NYS DEC visited the other 7 islands in New York waters, but the only colonial waterbirds were Great Blue Herons in the large colony on Valcour Island, Great Black-backed Gull on Garden Island, a young Great Black-backed loafing on Sheepshead Island and used stick nests on "No-Name" or Phelps Rocks below Crown Point.

Four of the seven Franklin County Bald Eagle nests had young, but only four eaglets fledged from three of those, with several deaths attributed to the wet weather and/or human disturbance during a critical wet weekend. The number of known Peregrine Falcon sites increased to 16, two of which are now in Clinton County, where adults were on territories in Black Brook and Ellenburg. In Essex County, seven of the eyries produced 12 young: two Chesterfield sites (adults at one, two fledged at the other), Crown Point (adult present), Elizabethtown (one fledged), Jay (nest with eggs failed), three Keene sites (one fledged two, other two active), Moriah (two fledged), two in North Elba (one fledged, pair at the other), Westport (two fledged), Willsboro (active pair) and Wilmington (two fledged). In spite of the increase in active sites, productivity was still below the record 20 chicks produced during the 1999 drought. Merlins also nested in Clinton County, with young reported from Peru, as well as at numerous sites in the other counties.

Rare transients included a **Red Knot** in alternate plumage at the Chazy riverlands on **20 June**, **2-3 Caspian Terns** at the same productive area **25 June-16 July** and another headed NE between **Four Brothers** and **Willsboro Point** **11 August**. Diligent Atlas observers Sheila Arthur, Eve Marshall and Christine Murphy of Montréal were rewarded with a rare vagrant **Western Tanager** while upgrading Block 6198C in northern Clinton County on the morning of **24 August**. The tanager was along Southwick Road, south of Perry Mills in the Town of Champlain, and while there have been some 30 records in NYS (as well as 14 in neighboring Québec), this is a first Regional record. Details have been submitted to NYSARC. By season's end, a total of 182 species plus a hybrid had been reported, an improvement over 165 species the previous summer, and with the annual summary forms for Atlas 2000 still to arrive. The total suggests, however, that we're still short of the **202 breeding birds** (**179 Confirmed**) recorded in Region 7 during the 1980-85 Atlas project. Finally, congratulations to Matt Medler on his Blackpoll Warbler, although we'd note that Jeff Carleton didn't have the advantage of global warming.

### CONTRIBUTORS

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### ABBREVIATIONS

AP – Ausable Point WMA; BB – Bloomingdale Bog; CH – Cumberland Head; CR – Chazy Rivers; FBI – Four Brothers islands; LA – Lake Alice WMA; PARC – former Plattsburgh AFB; SLB – Silver Lake Bog; SPB – Spring Pond Bog; TL – Tupper Lake.

#### LOONS – DUCKS

**Pied-billed Grebe:** y Fort Covington 7 Jul (DN, JP) and Oseetah L 26 Aug (LL).  
**Double-crested Cormorant:** 1346 nest FBI, 29 banded.  
**Am. Bittern:** CR, Essex Station, Oseetah L.

**Great Blue Heron:** 21 nests FBI; colony Valcour I.  
**GREAT EGRET:** 4 ad FBI "D" 10 Jun; 2 nests with eggs 25 Jun, 4 nestlings from 2 nests banded 11 Aug (RM, JP); CR 8 Jun (DH); Fort Covington 7 Jul; 2 Ft. Covington Center 8 Jul (DN, JP); AP 17



Jul (J&RH); Boquet R mouth 27 Jul (P&PW); Penfield Pd 10-15 Aug (DR); Piseco L 22 Aug (CK); or 8 sites in all 4 counties!

**Cattle Egret:** 15 nests FBI, 7 banded.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** 157 nests FBI, 63 banded; Scotion Cr 30 Jul (NO, MS).

**Snow Goose:** FBI 10 Jun.

**Canada Goose:** nested FBI and many Atlas Blocks; max 133 TL municipal pk 8 Aug (CD).

**Mute Swan:** LA 7 Jul (DH), origin unknown.

**Gadwall:** pair FBI 10 Jun.

**Blue-winged Teal:** y East Fort Covington 6 Jul (DN, JP).

**N. Pintail:** pair Mary Riley Rd, FRAN 5 Jul (DN, JP).

**Com. Goldeneye:** 5 hens Valcour I 19 Jun (JP).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** hen FBI "D" 25 Jun.

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Bald Eagle:** 4 fledged from 7 FRAN nests.

**N. Harrier:** 18 Notable Species Forms; hen distracting E. Coyote Ft. Covington hayfield 8 Jul (DN, JP).

**Merlin:** y Peru (E&SJ); imm Keene 12 Aug (J&PT); also L Placid, Merrill, Wilmington, with many Atlas reports expected.

**Peregrine Falcon:** 12 chicks fledged from 7 ESSE eyries; 16 sites now monitored (NS).

**Ring-necked Pheasant:** TL 4 Jul (CD), unexpected.

**Wild Turkey:** many broods reported.

**Virginia Rail:** nest-building RR bridge marsh, Raquette R 5 Jul (CD); other Atlas reports.

**Sora:** 2 AP 26 Jun (BK), a good find.

**Com. Moorhen:** CR 1 Jul, 20 Jul (BK, CM), scarce here.

**Am. Coot:** 1-3 CR 10-19 Jul (BK, CM),

scarce here.

**Semipalmated Plover:** arr Constable 5 Jul (DN, JP); CR 20 Jul; max 5 CR 30 Jul (BK, CM).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** arr 2 CR 1 Jul (BK, CM); Westville 5-6 Jul (DN, JP).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** alt plumage CR 25 Jun; 14+ CR 1 Jul (BK, CM); 1-3 Westville 5-7 Jul (DN, JP); max 29 CR 30 Jul (BK, CM).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** arr Constable and Westville FRAN 5 Jul (DN, JP), where rarely reported.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** nest with eggs AP 26 Jun (BK), serendipitous.

**Upland Sandpiper:** chicks Rouses Pt CLIN Jun (DP) and Dickinson Center FRAN Jul (MM); only reports; not found in 14 FRAN Blocks south of Québec 4-9 Jul (DN, JP).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** 2 FBI 10 Jun.

**RED KNOT:** alt plumage CR 20 Jun (BK, CM), rare here and very late date.

**Sanderling:** 5 Boquet R mouth 27 Jul (P&PW); only report.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** arr 2 CR 23 Jul; max 6 CR 30 Jul (BK, CM); 5 Boquet R mouth 27 Jul (P&PW).

**Least Sandpiper:** arr Constable 5 Jul (DN, JP); 25 CR 11 Jul; max 50 CR 30 Jul (BK, CM).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** CR 3 Aug (BK, CM), early CLIN by 11 days.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** 2 CR 23 Jul (BK, CM); only report.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** 3 alt plumage CR 23 Jul (BK, CM), uncommon.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** max 250 Westport 9 Aug (JP, RW).

**Ring-billed Gull:** 990 chicks banded, 25 ads color-banded FBI 10 Jun.

**Herring Gull:** 73 chicks banded FBI 10 Jun.

**Great Black-backed Gull:** nested FBI and Garden I; imm Sheepshead I.

**CASPIAN TERN:** 2-3 CR 25 Jun-16 Jul (J&RH, BK, CM); between FBI and

Willsboro Pt 11 Aug (RM, JP).

**Com. Tern:** FBI 10 Jun (RM, JP); 2-4 CR 25 Jun-10 Jul, building to max 45 (23 ad, 22 imm) CR 20 Jul; ad feeding y CR 10 Jul (BK, CM).

**Black Tern:** Akwesasne Mohawk tribal lands 8 Jul (DN, JP, DW); CR 11 Jul (BK); encouraging.

#### PIGEONS - WOODPECKERS

**Com. Nighthawk:** TL village 26 Jun, 2 there 13 Jul (CD); LA 21 Jul (NO); also Malone and Saranac L.

**Three-toed Woodpecker:** Oseetah L FRAN Jun (LL); 2 Powley Place HAMI Jul (DCR); BB, FRAN Aug (JG); a good start on mapping this rarity.

**Black-backed Woodpecker:** BB, L Colden (nest), Fishhole Pd, Hopkins Mt, L Lila, SLB; also a good start, with more reports expected.

#### FLYCATCHERS - WAXWINGS

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Basin Mt, Hurricane Mt, L Lila, SLB, Whiteface Mt; early reports.

**Willow Flycatcher:** LA 21 Jun (NO); AP 26 Jun (BK); n FRAN Jul (DN, JP).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** L Eaton 28 Aug (BC); first Atlas report.

**Gray Jay:** Barnum Pd Jun (TM); L Lila Jul (WL); more expected.

**Com. Raven:** new cliff nests with yg Haystack in Jay and Trout Pd.

**Cliff Swallow:** 40-50 n CLIN 2 Aug (DH).

**Boreal Chickadee:** Bushnell Falls, Calamity Bk, L Colden, Flowed Land, Giant, Hurricane, L Lila, Slant Rock; but the tip of the iceberg.

**Tufted Titmouse:** pair CH 19 Aug (NO).

**Carolina Wren:** Clinton Comm.

College; Peru; Plattsburgh; y from nest transported into ESSE in RV hand-reared and released CLIN (NS).

**Sedge Wren:** marsh with sedges near RR bridge Raquette R (5389B) 5 Jul (CD,

MD), rare here.

**Bicknell's Thrush:** Mt Adams, Giant, Hopkins, Hurricane, Whiteface; still sketchy.

**N. Mockingbird:** Stafford Rd CLIN 1 Jun-11 Jul, feeding y (HK); juv Champlain Jul (DH); CH 20 Aug (NO); an excellent start.

#### WARBLERS

**Golden-winged Warbler:** pair Reardon Rd Bombay FRAN 7 Jul (DN, JP); should be more.

**"LAWRENCE'S" WARBLER:**

Reardon Rd FRAN 7-8 Jul (DN, JP), a lovely bird.

**Tennessee Warbler:** Whitney headquarters 12 Jun (BP); only report to date.

**Yellow Warbler:** 2 CH 19 Aug (NO), late.

**"Yellow" Palm Warbler:** Charley Pd Outlet 14 Jun (BP), only Notable Species Form received.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Flowed Land 10 Aug (J&PT); only report.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** on territories

Whiteface 3 Jun and Hurricane 4 Jun; 2 late transients CH 4 Jun (NO); FBI 10 Jun (CH, RM); Willsboro Bay 10-11 Jun (MM), record late ESSE transient, breaking the 4 Jun 1926 Elizabethtown record of the late Geoffrey Carleton, then 16 years old.

#### TANAGERS - WEAVERS

**WESTERN TANAGER:** Southwick Rd, 2 mi. south of Perry Mills, T Champlain CLIN, 9:30 a.m., 24 Aug (SA, CM, EM), first Regional record (!) (NYSARC).

**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:**

singing male North Elba 23-30 Jun (SB, DH, BM); disturbed singing male Essex 24 Jun (CS); both excellent Atlas finds.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** 8 singing males PARC 14 Jun (MG); 2-3 singing males PARC 18-25 Jul (BK, CM); judged "okay."

**Red Crossbill:** Powley Place 5 Aug (DCR); BB 26 Jun, 4 Jul (SB), 14 Aug (JG); otherwise scarce.

**White-winged Crossbill:** FY Blue Ridge 29 Jul (DF); FL Keene 12 Aug (J&PT); singing males widely reported from Bog R, Bloomingdale, BB, Boreas R, Newcomb, North Hudson, Osgood Pd, Tahawus and many other locales.

#### ADDENDUM

**FISH CROW:** Plattsburgh 17 Apr-4 May 2000 (J&RH); first CLIN record.

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Redford 29 May 2000 (Don Fasking), late CLIN by 7 days.

### REGION 8 – HUDSON-MOHAWK

#### JANE DENKER GRAVES

133 York Avenue, Saratoga Springs NY 12866

As reported from the Albany International Airport, weather in June was extremely wet, with precipitation of 6.69", 3.07" above normal. Temperatures averaged 65.8°F, 1.1° below normal, with only 42% sunshine. July continued wet and cool, with precipitation totaling 4.49", 1.31" above normal. Temperatures averaged 67.6°, 4.2° below normal, tying the record for the coolest July since records began to be kept. There was only 52% sunshine. The cool, damp weather continued again in August, with rainfall of 4.70", 1.23" above normal. Temperatures averaged 68.5°, 4.2° below normal, with 58% sunshine. The summer of 2000 tied for the tenth coolest and 11th wettest on record.

How all this cool, wet weather affected the breeding season is hard to say. There were so many rainy weekends that it was hard to get out into the field. Atlasing was certainly affected by this restriction. Bald Eagle was well represented again with six breeding pairs, up from five in 1999. Five of the nests were successful and 13 young were fledged, three from a single pair. The Merlin pair did not return to their nest site on the shores of Lake George near Bolton Landing, but there is anecdotal evidence of a pair nesting on one of the Lake George islands not far from Bolton Landing. Peregrine Falcon experienced another excellent year in the Region, with at least five active nests in the Lake George area fledging eight young. There were also three nesting pairs on the Hudson River bridges in Albany and Greene counties; as with last year, two were successful fledging five young. Shorebird habitat was essentially nonexistent because of high water; only nine species were found. Henslow's Sparrow again did not breed at the Saratoga National Historical Park and was reported only from Dowmont Road east of Ft. Edward. Grasshopper Sparrow was present at several locations not previously reported, thanks to atlasing efforts. With the heavy cone crops, there is hope that this will be a good year for winter finches. In late August, White-winged Crossbill was reported from both

Albany and Rensselaer counties. Red Crossbill, Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak were all present at Jenny Lake.

One of the most interesting aspects of the summer season was the presence of several "southern" species that are normally rare in the Region, especially during breeding season. Acadian Flycatcher was found in southern Greene County. White-eyed Vireo was present in Columbia County in July. Worm-eating Warbler was reported from five locations and had nesting confirmed in the Town of Coeymans, Albany County. Hooded Warbler was found in three separate locations, most notably at least three singing males in one yard on the Helderberg Escarpment, another not far away in the Town of New Scotland, and one in the Town of Broome, Schoharie County.

Other unusual birds sighted included Long-eared Owl, Sedge Wren and Summer Tanager. One hundred seventy-eight species were reported during the period, down from last year's 184. They included 16 species of waterfowl, 12 hawks, 10 flycatchers, 7 thrushes, 23 warblers, 9 sparrows and 5 finches.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BCM – Black Creek Marsh State WMA, ALBA; CDWMA – Capital District WMA, RENS; CL – Collins Lake, SCHE; CSR – Cold Spring Road, T Saratoga, SARA; FtE – Fort Edward, WASH; HR – Hudson River; JL – Jenny Lake, SARA; MR – Mohawk River; NB – New Baltimore, GREE; PB – Pine Bush Preserve, ALBA; SCA – Saratoga County Airport; SNHP – Saratoga-Stillwater Flats, SARA (includes Saratoga Sod Farm); TRd – Tower Road, SARA; VF – Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve, SARA.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** 3 Jabes Pd T Hague 20 Jul;  
Green L FULT 19 Aug; nested Garnet L;  
only reports.

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Tamarac Rd T  
Brunswick 2 Jul (PC); ad carrying food  
Logtown Rd marsh T Root MONT 25 Jul

(TP); only reports.

**Am. Bittern:** 2 BCM 21 Jun; Mill Creek  
WARR 2 Jul; only reports.

**Least Bittern:** BCM 21 Jun (BC); marsh  
on E Bay L Champlain T Whitehall  
WASH 16 Jul (WE, NM); only reports.

**Great Blue Heron:** rookery Schodack I

noted 4 Jun (PC); max 10 Tongue Mt 18 Jun.

**Great Egret:** max 4 MR Colonie 12 Aug.

**Green Heron:** max 5 MR 12 Aug.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** ad Patroon Creek 1 Jul (AM); only report.

**Turkey Vulture:** max 35 Colonie Landfill area 11 Aug.

**Mute Swan:** no reports n of COLU.

**Wood Duck:** 10 T Taghkanic 9 Jul; bred JL.

**Blue-winged Teal:** CL 23 Jun; only report.

**Hooded Merganser:** Niskayuna 14, 17 Jul; only report.

**Com. Merganser:** 2 ad + 9 y Crane Mt area WARR 22 Jun; 25 NB 13 Aug.

**Ruddy Duck:** m Ghent 5 Jul (OW, CW).

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** Ghent 8 Jul; Germantown 25 Jul; only 2 Aug reports of singles.

**Bald Eagle:** 8 occupied nests in Region; 6 breeding pairs, 2 successful nests 5 y COLU; 1 successful nest 3 y GREE; 2 successful nests 5 y SCHO.

**N. Harrier:** 2 Dowmont Rd T Argyle 10 Jun (RB), m in courtship flight; Gansevoort 15 Jun; Frederick Rd Guilderland mid-late Jul; no other reports.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** only 9 reports of singles.

**Cooper's Hawk:** only 5 reports of singles.

**N. Goshawk:** Mechanicville Res 9 Jul (JG, AV); S. Rensselaer 11 Jul (Tim Dormandy to ADBC).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** JL thru; T Stephentown 23 Jun, 11Jul, 19 Jul; Crane Mt 29 Jun; Austerlitz 6 Jul, 14 Jul, 21 Aug; CDWMA 9 Jul; only reports.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** 17 reports of singles.

**Am. Kestrel:** 3 FR 9 Jul; 10 Cary Rd FtE 22 Jul; nested Amsterdam, 5 hatched, 4

FL.

**Merlin:** Gansevoort 25, 26, 29 Aug (BP); only report.

**Peregrine Falcon:** 5-6 active nests LG area, 8 FL; active nest Dunn Memorial Br, 4 FL; active nest Castleton Br, 1 FL; active nest Rip Van Winkle Br Catskill, failed (all BL).

**Wild Turkey:** good numbers throughout.

**Virginia Rail:** BCM 20 Jun;

Tomhannock Creek Marsh 2 Jul, 23 Jul; Tamarac Rd Marsh 26 Aug; only reports.

**Sora:** BCM 20 Jun; Ancram 4 Jul; Germantown 13 Jul.

**Black-bellied Plover:** no reports.

**Semipalmated Plover:** no reports.

**Killdeer:** max 15 FtE 8 Jul.

**Greater Yellowlegs:** no reports.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr FtE 22 Jul.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** arr Partridge Run WMA 28 Jul; 3 Schoharie 5 Aug; only reports.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** arr Claverack 3 Jul; Germantown 21 Jul; Tamarac Rd RENS 23 Jul; only reports.

**Upland Sandpiper:** 16 FtE 8 Jul; 4 reports of singles.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** arr FtE 22 Jul.

**Least Sandpiper:** no reports.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** 2 Shakers Creek T Colonie ALBA 2 Aug (WL).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** NB 12 Aug (RG); only report.

**Am. Woodcock:** VF 12 Jun (JG); ad + 3 y TRd 1 Jul (JG); "several" PB 12 Jul (RG); only reports.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** "several" NB 12 Jul (RG).

**Ring-billed Gull:** max 1100+ Cohoes 11 Aug (Gerry Colborn).

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** 15 reports of singles.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** 6 reports of singles.

**E. Screech Owl:** only 5 reports of singles.  
**Great Horned Owl:** only 2 reports of singles; 2 y heard Amsterdam 25 Jul.  
**Barred Owl:** only 1 report.  
**Long-eared Owl:** heard nightly Gallupville 24-27 Aug (Bbo, KB).  
**N. Saw-whet Owl:** S Rensselaer 27 Jun (Tim Dormandy *vide* BC).  
**Com. Nighthawk:** Malta 13 Aug; Slingerlands 21 Aug; 12 Albany 21 Aug; 21 Saratoga 21 Aug; 7 Saratoga 22 Aug; 115 Saratoga 24 Aug; 180 Slingerlands 24 Aug; 20-75 Albany 24 Aug; 57 Saratoga 25 Aug (JG); 45 Slingerlands 25 Aug; 12 Saratoga 26 Aug; 100 Slingerlands 27 Aug; 11 Slingerlands 28 Aug; 9 Slingerlands 31 Aug.  
**Whip-poor-will:** 2 TRd 1 Jul (JG); 5 CSR 20 Jun (JG).  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** 40 banded plus 9 returns JL thru (RY).  
**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** 14 reports of singles.  
**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** max 6 Crane Mt 29 Jun; 2 pairs nested JL.  
**Pileated Woodpecker:** 27 reports of singles.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Meadowdale Rd 13 Aug (L. Alden), early migrant.  
**E. Wood Pewee:** max 5 Medusa BBS 18 Jun; 5 SNHP 23 Jun; 6 Germantown 21 Jul.  
**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** 2 Hunter Mt 19 Jun (RG); Crane Mt area 28 Jun; only reports.  
**Acadian Flycatcher:** T Hunter 1 Jun (WB).  
**Alder Flycatcher:** max 5 TRd 11 Jun; 4 SNHP 20 Jul.  
**Willow Flycatcher:** max 9 BCM 24 Jun.  
**Least Flycatcher:** max 15 Medusa BBS 18 Jun.  
**E. Phoebe:** max 18 COLU 18 Jun.  
**Great Crested Flycatcher:** max 12

Crescent BBS.  
**E. Kingbird:** max 32 Ghent 19 Aug.  
**White-eyed Vireo:** Copake 20 Jul (BC).  
**Yellow-throated Vireo:** max-5 Crescent BBS.  
**Blue-headed Vireo:** max 5 TRd 11 Jun.  
**Warbling Vireo:** max 16 Crescent BBS.  
**Red-eyed Vireo:** max 53 Warrensburg BBS.  
**Fish Crow:** 5 Amsterdam 11 Jun; ad + FL Castleton 30 Jun; 3 reports of singles.  
**Com. Raven:** reported throughout.  
**Horned Lark:** 3 courtship/territorial flight SCA 18 Jun; only report.  
**Purple Martin:** SL 8 Jun; only report.  
**Tree Swallow:** max 403 Ghent 22 Jul (OW, CW).  
**Bank Swallow:** nesting colony with ca 100 individuals using holes Schodack Valley RENS 8 Jun; 28 nest holes CR29 Sweets Landing FULT 8 Jul.  
**Cliff Swallow:** last 2 Tamarac Pd Brunswick 27 Aug.  
**Carolina Wren:** 9 reports of singles.  
**House Wren:** max 12 Crescent BBS; 10 Cobleskill BBS.  
**Winter Wren:** max 6 Lishakill Preserve 17 Jul (WL); 26 reports of singles, seemed more numerous than usual.  
**Sedge Wren:** 2 Dowmont Rd T Argyle 21 Jun (JG); 1 remained at least thru Jul.  
**Marsh Wren:** max 5 BCM 24 Jun.  
**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** several Gallupville throughout Aug; 3 reports of singles.  
**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** 4 Crescent BBS.  
**E. Bluebird:** numbers generally good.  
**Veery:** max 17 S Berne BBS 24 Jun; 14 CSR 9 Jul.  
**Bicknell's Thrush:** 4 Hunter Mt 10 Jun (RG).  
**Swainson's Thrush:** 3 Hunter Mt 10 Jun; 2 Crane Mt 29 Jun; 3 reports of singles.  
**Hermit Thrush:** max 6 Crane Mt 29 Jun.  
**Wood Thrush:** max 14 Crescent BBS;

10 Cedar Bluff Rd SARA 8 Jun; 12 CSR 9 Jul.

**Gray Catbird:** max 34 Crescent BBS.

**Brown Thrasher:** reported throughout Region; CO Amsterdam.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** max 7 SNHP 20 Jun; still present SNHP 30 Aug.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** no reports.

**Nashville Warbler:** max 6 Crane Mt 29 Jun; arr SNHP 25 Aug.

**Yellow Warbler:** max 19 Crescent BBS; 10 Cedar Bluff Rd 18 Jun.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** max 6 Medusa BBS.

**Magnolia Warbler:** max 3-4 Hunter Mt 10 Jun; 13 reports of singles.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** max 4 Crane Mt 29 Jun.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** max 24 Crane Mt 29 Jun.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** max 16 Crane Mt 29 Jun; arr SNHP 18 Aug.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** 16 reports of singles; arr SNHP 25 Aug.

**Pine Warbler:** max 4 CSR 9 Jul.

**Prairie Warbler:** 6 SNHP 20 Jun; 5 TRd 1 Jul.

**Palm Warbler:** 2 S Rensselaer 21, 28 Jun (*vide* BC); late migrants?

**Cerulean Warbler:** Gallatin 29 Jun; no reports from SISP.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** max 10 Cobleskill BBS.

**Am. Redstart:** max 9 Warrensburg BBS.

**Worm-eating Warbler:** Gallatin 25, 28 Jun (BC); nested Blossom Hill Rd T Coeymans; seen carrying food 13 Jul (RB); Ancram 16 Jul (BC); Germantown 24 Jul (BC); Copake 15 Aug (ADBC).

**Ovenbird:** max 32 Warrensburg BBS; 10 SNHP 4 Jul.

**N. Waterthrush:** only 3 reports of singles.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** FY Langley Rd MONT 14 Jun; 11 reports of singles.

**Mourning Warbler:** Hunter Mt 10 Jun; TRd 11 Jun; Dyken Pd RENS 18 Jun; Cabin Creek WARR 30 Jun; Wardsboro T Hague 1 Jul; CDWMA 9 Jul.

**Com. Yellowthroat:** max 41 Duanesburg BBS; 32 Medusa BBS.

**Hooded Warbler:** T Broome SCHO 2, 3 Jun (Eileen Corbett); at least 3 singing m Beaver Dam Rd T Berne ALBA thru (MS); Cedar Grove Rd T New Scotland ALBA at least thru mid-July (KO).

**Wilson's Warbler:** CPHW 27 Aug (RB).

**Canada Warbler:** max 3 TRd 11 Jun; arr SNHP 17 Aug; several Gallupville last wk Aug.

#### TANAGERS - WEAVERS

**SUMMER TANAGER:** f found dead Old Chatham COLU 9 Jun (Kate Dunham, Elisabeth Grace); first report since 1984.

**Scarlet Tanager:** max 6 CSR 9 Jun; 45 reports of singles; numbers up.

**E. Towhee:** max 11 SNHP 18 Aug.

**Chipping Sparrow:** max 24 Warrensburg BBS; 22 Cobleskill BBS; did well JL, 24 banded (RY).

**Field Sparrow:** max 6 SNHP 20 Jun.

**Vesper Sparrow:** 3 FtE 12 Jun; singing SCA 12 Jun; Kinderhook 4 Jul; 3 Gansevoort 7 Jul.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** 2 FtE 10 Jun; 2 Frederick Rd T Guilderland 4 Jul; Ancram 4 Jul; T Ghent 9 Jul; Copake 17 Jul; Taghkanic 9-22 Aug.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** 2 Dowmont Rd T Argyle Jun-Jul; did not breed SNHP.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** 2 Mill Creek WARR 1 Jul.

**Swamp Sparrow:** max 9 BCM 24 Jun.

**White-throated Sparrow:** max 9 Warrensburg BBS.

**Dark-eyed Junco:** 16 Crane Mt 29 Jun.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** max 5 Gallatin 28 Jun.

**Indigo Bunting:** max 5 SNHP 13 Jul; 24 reports of singles.

**Bobolink:** good numbers FtE and SNHP; max 200+ Gansevoort 28-29 Aug.

**E. Meadowlark:** good numbers SNHP.

**Orchard Oriole:** FtE 2 Jun; Amsterdam 14 Jun; Claverack 24 Jun; Ancram 4- 5 Jul.

**Baltimore Oriole:** max 16 Crescent BBS; 18+ Meadowdale Rd 18 Aug.

**Purple Finch:** 93 banded JL Jun-Aug (RY); reported in small numbers throughout Region.

**Red Crossbill:** heard JL 17 Jun (RY); only report.

**White-winged Crossbill:** 4 Berlin Mt RENS 20 Aug (FM); Pinnacle 26 Aug (RB).

**Pine Siskin:** Gansevoort 1 Jun; New Salem 4 Jun; Hillsdale 13-26 Jun; juv banded JL 3 Jul; 2 banded JL 7 Jul; Austerlitz 6-7 Aug.

**Am. Goldfinch:** 40 banded JL thru.

**Evening Grosbeak:** 4 T Hague 30 Jun; 9 banded JL (RY); only reports.

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## REGION 9 – HUDSON-DELAWARE

MICHAEL BOCHNIK

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June was quite wet, with days of clouds, rain and drizzle outnumbering dry sunny days. The Region experienced heavy rains on 6 June, with 5" in Orange County. All areas had at least 4" of cumulative rain by 15 June. That's quite a bit considering that the entire June average is about 3.6". July was cool and even wetter, with over 6" of rain. The normal average is 4.1". There were no 90°F days from mid-June through July, a blessing for those who participated in the Breeding Bird Atlas. August was closer to normal, but still cooler than average.

Two good birds were found due to the efforts of Breeding Bird Atlas observers. The first was a **Clay-colored Sparrow** along Mt. Cliff Road in Sullivan County, found by Valerie Freer 3 July and observed by many others until at least 22 July. This is the same area where one was seen two years ago. The second was a **Sedge Wren** in nearby Woodburne, Sullivan County, on 14 July by Ed Debellevue. It was seen carrying nesting material on 25 and 26 July and with a possible second bird on 9 August.

Little Blue Heron sightings at Edith G. Read Sanctuary in Rye, Westchester County in June and July are to be expected, but one on the Delaware River in Sullivan County 10 August is exceptional.

As usual, a few notable ducks were seen during the summer including Brant, Greater Scaup and Red-breasted Merganser at Read Sanctuary in late June. A Ruddy Duck was in Dutchess County on 24 July, followed by another in Rye, Westchester County on 19-20 August. Both Common and Hooded mergansers were found in Sullivan County.

A Lesser Black-backed Gull observed by Tom Burke in Rye on 27 August



marks the earliest appearance and first August record in Westchester. On the same day Lawrence Brinker also found three Roseate Terns in Rye. This is the first sighting in Westchester since 1975 and only the third record I'm able to find for the county.

A most unusual report was of two Ruby-crowned Kinglets at Sams Point Dwarf Pine Ridge Preserve in Ulster County 7 July, with one singing. Efforts to relocate these birds failed. The preserve sits atop the Shawangunk Ridge at nearly 2300' and one wonders if it is possible for them to be breeding so far from their known range in the Adirondacks.

A male Yellow-throated Warbler was found by Andy Guthrie at Mongaup, Sullivan County, the site where two males were seen in 1997. There were a few reports of Pine Siskins from both Dutchess and Sullivan counties in June and August. It is unusual to see this many reports in summer. Other notable birds for the season included a Blue Grosbeak at a Dutchess feeder 13 and 14 July (no details) and a "Lawrence's" Warbler in Rye 17 August.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

EGR – Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary, Rye WEST; MC – Marshlands Conservancy, Rye WEST; MRG – Mianus River Gorge WEST; PNR – Pawling Nature Preserve DUTC; PP – Piermont Pier ROCK; SG – Shawangunk Grassland NWR (formerly Galeville Airport) ULST; TP – Tamarack Preserve, Amenia DUTC; WPR – Ward Pound Ridge Reservation WEST.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Pied-billed Grebe:** 2 Bashakill 3 Jun; EGR 24 Jun; 2 with y Wawarsing Jul.  
**Least Bittern:** MC 25, 27 Jun; 2 Tivoli Bay 30 Jul; PP 4 Aug.  
**Great Blue Heron:** 16 nests Hurleyville Cemetery Jun; 4 nests Wawarsing late Jul.  
**Great Egret:** 26 MC 30 Jul.

**Snowy Egret:** 14 MC 30 Jul.  
**Little Blue Heron:** EGR 24 Jun; 2 EGR 30 Jul; Delaware River SULL 10 Aug (PJ).  
**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** 16 EGR 30 Jul; 12 New Hamburgh 18 Aug.  
**Black Vulture:** 2 Doodletown 4 Jun; Ellenville 24 Jun; 2 Ellenville 16 Jul; TP 9 Aug.

**Brant:** 8 EGR 24 Jun; EGR 27 Jun.  
**Greater Scaup:** 2 EGR 30 Jul (TB).  
**Hooded Merganser:** Hilldale Rd SULL  
4 Jun (RS); Beaverkill campground 29  
Jun (MC, VF).  
**Com. Merganser:** f + 4 y Cliff L SULL  
17 Jun (KM); f + 6 y Roscoe 27 Jul (VF).  
**Red-breasted Merganser:** EGR 24 Jun  
(TB).  
**Ruddy Duck:** DUTC 24 Jul (RN); MC  
19-20 Aug (TB).

#### HAWKS – ALCIDS

**Osprey:** 2 nests Bashakill; EGR 24 Jun;  
Stissing L 6 Aug.  
**Bald Eagle:** 2 y in nest Swan L 10 Jul;  
nesting Bashakill and Roundout Res.  
**N. Harrier:** MC 24 Jun; SG 26 Jun.  
**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Wurtsboro 17  
Jun; Swan L 11-20 Jun; Callicoon Center  
SULL 28 Jun; DUTC all Jul; DUTC 1  
Jul.  
**Cooper's Hawk:** WPR 28 Jun.  
**Broad-winged Hawk:** 2 MRG 25 Jun;  
ad + FL Horseshoe L Rd SULL 15 Jul.  
**Red-shouldered Hawk:** Wappinger Falls  
6, 11 Jul.  
**Am. Kestrel:** MC 17 Aug.  
**Peregrine Falcon:** Newburgh-Beacon  
Bridge 25 Aug.  
**N. Bobwhite:** Bashakill 10 Jun.  
**Black-bellied Plover:** 8 MC 17 Aug.  
**Semipalmated Plover:** Rye 20 Jun; 5  
MC 30 Jul.  
**Am. Oystercatcher:** 4 Rye 20 Jun.  
**Greater Yellowlegs:** 3 MC 20 Jul; 6 MC  
30 Jul; 10 MC 17 Aug.  
**Spotted Sandpiper:** 7 Cross River Res 4  
Jul; 3 Jul reports from DUTC.  
**Upland Sandpiper:** SG 4 Jun; 5 Blue  
Chip Farm 26 Jun.  
**Ruddy Turnstone:** 2 EGR 30 Jul.  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** 25 MC 30  
Jul; 134 MC 17 Aug.  
**Least Sandpiper:** 5 MC 30 Jul.  
**Short-billed Dowitcher:** 3 MC 17, 19  
Aug.

**Laughing Gull:** 4 Rye 20 Jun; 75 Rye 27  
Aug.  
**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Rye 27 Aug  
(TB).  
**Roseate Tern:** 3 (2 ad, 1 imm) Rye 27  
Aug (LB, TB).  
**Com. Tern:** 30 pairs EGR 20 Jun; pair  
Hen I 20 Jun; 25 EGR 30 Jul; 80 Rye 27  
Aug.  
**Forster's Tern:** 4 Rye 27 Aug.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Mourning Dove:** summit of Balsam L  
Mt at 3723' 4 Jun.  
**Monk Parakeet:** 4 Bloomingburg SULL  
13 Aug (KC, RD).  
**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Cliff L SULL 17  
Jun; WPR 28 Jun; Buttercup Sanc 31 Jul;  
2 Horseshoe L Rd SULL 10-15 Aug.  
**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Doodletown 4  
Jun; Yankee L SULL 16 Jun; WPR 25,  
28 Jun.  
**Barred Owl:** 5 MRG 25 Jun; WPR 28  
Jun.  
**Com. Nighthawk:** 40 MC 19 Aug; 50  
Freedom P 25 Aug; 60 Wurtsboro 27  
Aug; 70 Yonkers 30 Aug.  
**Whip-poor-will:** 2 Wurtsboro 18 Jun.  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** MC 24,  
27 Jun.  
**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Yonkers 9  
Jun; FY Hyde Park 19 Jul.  
**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** nest with y  
Woodbourne 20 Jun; Poquag 29 Jul.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Pawling 6 Aug  
(BP), early; WPR 26 Aug.  
**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** 2 Cliff L 17  
Jun; 2 banded Cape Pd 17, 20 Aug; MC  
20 Aug.  
**Acadian Flycatcher:** Doodletown 4 Jun;  
2 Westbrookville 18, 27 Jun; 3 MRG 25  
Jun; 2 PNR 5 Jul; TP 12 Jul; banded  
Cape Pd 24 Aug.  
**Alder Flycatcher:** Bashakill 4 Jun;  
Liberty 16 Jun.

**Willow Flycatcher:** 3 MC 27 Jun.  
**White-eyed Vireo:** ad + 2 imm DUTC 9 Jul.  
**Yellow-throated Vireo:** 3 MRG 25 Jun; 6 WPR 2 Jul.  
**Blue-headed Vireo:** 2 Cliff L SULL 17 Jun; Pine Kill Rd SULL 30 Jun; WPR 2 Jul; 2 PNR 5 Jul; TP 12 Jul.  
**Warbling Vireo:** 3 WPR 2 Jul.  
**Com. Raven:** PNR 5 Jul; Clove Valley 24 Jul.  
**Purple Martin:** 4 DUTC 25 Jul.  
**Bank Swallow:** 2 MC 20 Jul.  
**Cliff Swallow:** 40 WPR 17 Jul.  
**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** 2 Kensico Res WEST 15 Jun; Rye 25 Jul.  
**Brown Creeper:** Kensico Res WEST 15 Jun; WPR 2 Jul.  
**SEDGE WREN:** Budd Rd, Woodburne 24-26 Jul; 2nd bird 9 Aug (ED, VF, RD, KC, PM et al).  
**Marsh Wren:** 8 MC 27 Jun; few PP 4 Aug.  
**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** feeding cowbird Kensico Res WEST 15 Jun.  
**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** 2 Sams Pt Dwarf Pine Ridge Preserve ULST 7 Jul (CJ).  
**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** 6 WPR 2 Jul.  
**Swainson's Thrush:** few Balsam L Mt 4 Jun; Roscoe 30 Jun; Horseshoe L Rd SULL 8-14 Aug.  
**Hermit Thrush:** 5 WPR 28 Jun; 3 PNR 6 Jul.  
**Cedar Waxwing:** 12 WPR 2 Jul.

#### WARBLERS

**Blue-winged Warbler:** 5 WPR 28 Jun.  
**Golden-winged Warbler:** nesting near Mongaup.  
**"Lawrence's" Warbler:** MC 17 Aug (TB).  
**N. Parula:** WPR 28 Jun.  
**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** PNR 5 Jul; WPR 28 Jun.  
**Magnolia Warbler:** Roscoe 1 Jul; Nellie Rd DUTC 19 Jul; MC 20 Aug.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** common Balsam L Mt 4 Jun; Sterling Forest 25 Jun; 3 PNR 6 Jul.  
**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** few Balsam L Mt 4 Jun; 2 Shandeele 28 Jun; several Sams Pt Dwarf Pine Ridge Preserve ULST 17 Jul.  
**Black-throated Green Warbler:** 10 MRG 25 Jun; 6 WPR 28 Jun; 3 PNR 5 Jul; TP 12 Jul.  
**Blackburnian Warbler:** 3 y TP 12 Jul; Liberty 16 Jul; 2 Cliff L SULL 17 Jun.  
**Yellow-throated Warbler:** Mongaup 4 June (AG); Sterling Forest 25 Jun (MV).  
**Pine Warbler:** 9 WPR 28 Jun; Rye 1 Jul; 26 WPR 2 Jul.  
**Prairie Warbler:** 6 WPR 28 Jun; 5 + 9 y Nellie Hill DUTC.  
**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Flint Hill 30 Aug.  
**Blackpoll Warbler:** Balsam L Mt 4 Jun; MC 18 Aug.  
**Cerulean Warbler:** 19 Doodletown 24 Jun.  
**Black-and-white Warbler:** 10 WPR 28 Jun.  
**Am. Redstart:** 4 EGR 24 Jun; 4 WPR 28 Jun; 5 TP 12 Jul.  
**Worm-eating Warbler:** 12 MRG 25 Jun; 3 PNR 5 Jul.  
**Ovenbird:** 20 WPR 28 Jun.  
**Louisiana Waterthrush:** 5 MRG 25 Jun; 6 WPR 28 Jun.  
**Kentucky Warbler:** 2 bring food to a nest Tarrytown 1 Jun-5 Jul; Doodletown 4 Jun; Vassar Farm 8-12 Jul.  
**Mourning Warbler:** Balsam L Mt 4 Jun; Bashakill 4 Jun; MC 20 Aug.  
**Com. Yellowthroat:** 22 Wappinger Falls 6 Jul.  
**Hooded Warbler:** WPR 28 Jun; 4 PNR 5 Jul; 2 TP 12 Jul.  
**Canada Warbler:** FY Dietz Rd SULL 17 Jun; MC 18 Aug.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**Scarlet Tanager:** 12 MRG 25 Jun; 20

WPR 28 Jun; 15 WPR 2 Jul.  
**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** Mt  
Cliff Rd near Fallsburg SULL 3-22 Jul  
(VF, mob).  
**Field Sparrow:** WPR 28 Jun.  
**Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** 10  
Hen I 20 Jun (TB); 5 MC 27 Jun (TB).  
**Swamp Sparrow:** 2 MC 24 Jun.  
**Dark-eyed Junco:** few Balsam L Mt 4  
Jun; 5 TP 12 Jul; several y Sams Pt  
Dwarf Pine Ridge Preserve ULST 9, 17  
Jul.  
**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** 6 WPR 28  
Jun.  
**Blue Grosbeak:** DUTC feeder 13-14 Jul

(ZM) [no details].  
**Bobolink:** WPR 28 Jun.  
**Orchard Oriole:** MC 24 Jun; 5 WPR 28  
Jun.  
**Pine Siskin:** SULL feeder 22 Jun (RD); 2  
y Roscoe feeders 25 Jun (MG);  
Horseshoe L Rd SULL 8 Aug (KC);  
several Old Camby Rd DUTC 20 Aug  
(JW); unusual to see this many reports in  
summer.  
  
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## REGION 10 – MARINE

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In spite of the fact that the temperature for June and July was approximately normal and August was 3°F above normal, the summer was not hot. On the contrary, it almost appeared that there was no summer. After 16 June, the temperature never exceeded 90°, an almost unprecedented happening. There were also no really cold lows during the season. July was very wet, with almost twice the normal rainfall. The other summer months were normal. The edges of some ponds were under water in late July and early August, resulting in a loss of favorable shorebirding spots. Agriculture was generally affected by the hot weather and very wet mid summer.

This was the first breeding season of Atlas 2000. The few reports to date of Atlas observations from our contributors have suggested decreases in populations of American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant and Northern Bobwhite and increases and range extensions for Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Warbling Vireo and Orchard Oriole. Nesting records noted by our contributors that are recent range extensions from the previous Atlas period are noted in the species accounts even though some may have been previously reported in recent years.

Noteworthy events this season include some southern stragglers, Eurasian vagrants, pelagic sightings from shore and ship and a very lost tern. First, we'll look

at the pelagic summaries, then species discussions in AOU order.

The first pelagic species of the season, all seen from shore, were a couple of Wilson's Storm-Petrels seen off Shinnecock Inlet 10 June. This was followed by several from Democrat Pt. 11 June, then 15-20 Cory's Shearwaters and 2 Parasitic Jaegers at Pikes Beach on 13 June, 12 Wilson's Storm-Petrels off Shinnecock Inlet 14 June and 2 there on 15 June. A Sooty Shearwater was seen at Shinnecock 16 June. On 18 June, at Jones Beach West End Field 1, 5 Wilson's Storm-Petrels and an unidentified shearwater were seen. On 18 June, Charles A. Witek III observed what was clearly an albatross of undetermined species at a location 18.6 miles at 149<sup>δ</sup> from the head buoy in Fire Island Inlet. (For more on albatrosses in the North Atlantic, see *The Kingbird* 50:223.)

On 1 July, Angus Wilson and Andy Guthrie joined a whale watching trip from Montauk traveling to a point roughly 17 miles south of Montauk. The highlights of the trip were: 1 Cory's Shearwater, 2 Greater Shearwaters, 4 Sooty Shearwaters, 2 Manx Shearwaters, 96 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 1 subadult Parasitic Jaeger (in alternate plumage but lacking developed tail streamers) and 4 Northern Gannets. On the morning of 15 July, an onshore seabird flight was noted off Shinnecock Inlet when Andy Baldelli and Hugh McGuinness noted 50 Cory's Shearwaters, 3 Manx Shearwaters, 6 Wilson's Storm-Petrels and 3 Parasitic Jaegers. Then, on 16 July, the count at Main Beach in East Hampton, a little after eight in the morning, produced these amazing totals: 6 Northern Gannets, 150 Cory's, 15 Greater, 77 Sooty, **38 Manx** (previous max count was 5), 300+ unidentified shearwaters, 20 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 4 Parasitic Jaegers and a very surprising **South Polar Skua**. On 20 July, a whale watching trip from Montauk, 20 miles offshore, recorded 150 shearwaters, split fairly evenly between Cory's, Greater and Sooty, plus 200 Wilson's Storm-Petrels. On 26 July, a sea watch off Main Beach in East Hampton produced 3 Wilson's Storm-Petrels and 3 Parasitic Jaegers. On 29 July, pelagic birds seen from shore included 4 Cory's, 1 Manx and 9 unidentified shearwaters from Triton Lane on Dune Road, and on 30 July over 80 Cory's Shearwaters from Sagaponack to Shinnecock Inlet. On 29 July Gail Benson, Tom Burke, Andy Guthrie and Angus Wilson joined Dr. Artie Kopelman and enjoyed a remarkable concentration of whales and birds in an area SW of Block Island. Trip totals were: 3 Common Loons, 3 Northern Gannets, 90+ Cory's Shearwaters, 150 Greater Shearwaters, 17+ Sooty Shearwaters, 12+ Manx Shearwaters, 2500+ Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 12 Red Phalaropes and 1 Yellow Warbler.

On a whale watching trip 5 August, birders counted 80 Cory's, 2 Greater, 2 Sooty, 2 Manx shearwaters and 1000 Wilson's Storm-Petrels. On 10 August, totals included 75 Cory's, 25 Greater, 2 Sooty and 1 Manx shearwaters plus 250 Wilson's Storm-Petrels. On 13 August, 3 Cory's Shearwaters were found off Sagaponack, and on 14 August, 7 were off Main Beach, East Hampton, along with 7 Wilson's Storm-Petrels. On 19 August, a whale watching trip from Montauk towards Cox's Ledge, southeast of Montauk, recorded 80 Cory's, 35 Greater, 5 Sooty and 1 Manx shearwaters, 5 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 2 Northern Gannets and a Pomarine Jaeger.

On 26 August, Orhan Birol was trolling for tuna 50 miles off Shinnecock when a dark tropical tern flew by, which he tentatively identified as a **Sooty Tern**. Other birds seen on the trip included 12 Cory's and 2 Greater shearwaters and 25 Wilson's Storm-Petrels. During the last week of August, Audubon's Shearwaters were found 50 miles south of Montauk on several days with a maximum of 2 on 31 August.

**Table of Pelagic Sightings**

Date/Location	CS	GS	SS	Mx	AS	SSp	WSP	RP	PoJ	PaJ	ST	SPS
June												
10 Shinnecock							2					
11 Democrat Pt.							2					
13 Pikes Beach	15-20									2		
14 Shinnecock							12					
15 Shinnecock							2					
16 Shinnecock			1									
18 Jones Beach W End						1	5					
July												
1 17 mi S of Montauk	1	2	4	2			96			1		
15 Shinnecock	50			3			6			3		
16 East Hampton	150	15	77	38		300	20			4		1
20 20 mi S Montauk	50	50	50				200					
26 East Hampton							3			3		
29 Dune Rd, Quogue	4			1		9						
29 SW Block Island	90+	150	17+	12+			2500	12				
30 Shinnecock	80											
August												
5 S Montauk Harbor	80	2	2	2			1000					
10 S Montauk Harbor	75	25	2	1			250					
13 Sagaponack	3											
14 East Hampton	7						7					
19 SE Montauk	80	35	5	1			5		1			
26 50 mi off Shinnecock	12	2					25				1	
31 50 mi S of Montauk						2						

Legend: CS-Cory's Shearwater; GS-Greater Shearwater; SS-Sooty Shearwater; Mx- Manx Shearwater; AS-Audubon's Shearwater; SSp-shearwater species; WSP-Wilson's Storm-Petrel; RP-Red Phalarope; PoJ-Pomarine Jaeger; PaJ-Parasitic Jaeger; ST-Sooty Tern; SPS-South Polar Skua.

Ed Hornung reported from Fishers Island that a pair of **Common Eiders** bred there this summer. This is probably the 2nd year in a row, following an unconfirmed report from last summer. This would be the first breeding record in New York State. A report is being submitted to NYSARC.

On 10 June, Andy Guthrie and Tony Lauro found a **Black-necked Stilt** on the

Jones Beach strip in the pond along the four-wheel-drive access road that leads to the "Sore Thumb." The bird was still there 17 June. An American Avocet was found at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge 13 August. It remained until 20 August. Another appeared at the mouth of the Terrell River in Center Moriches on 12 August (Jay Kuhlman fide AJL), seen only that day. On 15 July, a "Western" Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*) was found by McGuinness, Baldelli, Wilson and Guthrie at Little Pikes Inlet. David Sibley, discussing subspecies on his Web site, has written, "The two Willet subspecies are distinguished by size, proportions, plumage and voice. Their breeding ranges are separated by hundreds of miles and they must be considered excellent candidates for splitting." Birders, be on the alert!

A **Red-necked Stint** was found by John and Gerta Fritz 12 July at Cupsogue County Park and then relocated slightly to the east at Pikes Beach, in the community of Westhampton Dunes. The bird, in full breeding plumage, was seen daily to 18 July. On 15 July, Eric Salzman and others in search of it, located a second stint variously referred to as the "paler stint" or "second stint." Salzman stated that day that it was a **Little Stint**, but others speculated that it might be another Red-necked Stint in a more advanced molt. A series of photos, taken by Rex Stanford through a telescope, confirmed the Little Stint identification. (See article in this issue.) Pictures and discussion of both stints are on Angus Wilson's Web site. Some lucky birders managed to see both stints on the same day. On 25 August, scouting a day prior to a Brooklyn Bird Club field trip, Salzman reported a possible **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** in the sod fields off Route 105 in Riverhead. Unfortunately, the bird could not be relocated the next day. There is only one accepted record for NYS. A NYSARC report has been submitted. On 18 June, while looking for an Arctic Tern (see below), Al Ott found a **Curlew Sandpiper** at Democrat Pt.

While sea watching at Democrat Pt on 11 June, Angus Wilson, Tony Lauro and Andy Guthrie were surprised by 2 adult **Black-legged Kittiwakes** flying westward beyond the breakers. While summer birds have been reported from Cape Cod to our north, there seem to be no New York records from 23 May until August.

A bird fitting the description of a "**Cayenne Tern**" was found independently on 17 July at Little Pikes Beach by John and Gerta Fritz, Hugh McGuinness, Shai Mitra and Peggy and Joel Horman. (See article in this issue.) The Cayenne Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis eurygnatha*) is the South American equivalent of the Sandwich Tern, which it closely resembles, except that it has a yellow or greenish-yellow bill instead of black with a yellow tip. It interbreeds with Sandwich Tern on certain islands off the northern coast of South America, and for this reason the two were lumped as a single species a number of years ago. On 18 July, it was in the same location, with a nominate **Sandwich Tern** (*S.s. sandvicensis*). The latter was last seen 20 July. In the event there is ever a split again, this would become, if accepted by NYSARC, an addition to the New York State Checklist. Later in the season, an adult **Sandwich Tern** was photographed at close range in flight at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge on 26 August by Michael Stubblefield.

On 10 June, Andy Guthrie and Tony Lauro found a first-summer **Arctic Tern** with a small group of Roseate and Common terns at Democrat Point at the extreme western tip of Fire Island.

An adult **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was found at noon at the Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area on 29 June. Another or the same was found at Jones Beach West End the next day. A **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** was found by Steve Walter late in the afternoon on 1 June near the Douglaston train station in Queens County. Andy Guthrie and Angus Wilson, both working in Manhattan, took the train to the station and managed to see the bird in the waning light. It was not relocated the next day.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Bob Adamo, Seth Ausubel, Andy Baldelli, Bill Benner, P.A. Buckley, Orhan Birol, Thomas W. Burke, Ben Cacace, Elizabeth Carrozza, Paul Castle, James Clinton Sr., John J. Collins, Mike Cooper, Robert DiCandido, Joe DiCostanzo, Peter Dorosh, Ken Feustel, Tom Fiore, Howie Fischer, Henry F. Flamm, Gerta Fritz, John J. Fritz, Doug Futuyma, Andrew Guthrie, Joel Horman, Peggy Horman, Ed Hornung, Rob Jett, David W. Klauber, Greg Kunkel, Robert J. Kurtz, Anthony J. Lauro, Emanuel Levine, Patricia Lindsay, Christopher Lyons, Hugh McGuinness, Eric Miller, Karlo Mirth, Shai Mitra, Al Ott, Beverly Prentice, Joan Quinlan, Glenn Quinn, Herbert H. Roth, Eric Salzman, Starr Saphir, Seymour Schiff, Lore J. Schore, Rex Stanford, Michael Stubblefield, Steve Walter, Angus Wilson (AnW), Charles A. Witek III, Alvin Wollin (AW), Matt Victoria.

## ABBREVIATIONS

A2 – breeding range extensions found under ATLAS 2000; APP – Alley Pond Park; CB – Cedar Beach; CLP – Clove Lake Park, SI; CP – Central Park; DP – Democrat Pt, FI; EH – East Hampton sea watch; FI – Fire Island; FP – Forest Park, Queens; H – Huntington; JBCH – Jones Beach; JBWE – Jones Beach West End; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; LI – Long Island; MEB – Mecox Bay; MP – Montauk Point; PB – Pikes Beach, Westhampton; PBP – Pelham Bay Park; PL – Point Lookout side Jones Inlet; PP – Prospect Park, Brooklyn; SHIN – Shinnecock Inlet; SI – Staten Island.

### LOONS – DUCKS

**Com. Loon:** a few summered JBWE.

**ALBATROSS SP:** 18.6 mi at 149° from head buoy in FI Inlet 18 Jun (CW).

**Cory's Shearwater:** many seen from shore mid Jun to very late Aug; 15-20 PB 13 Jun; 150 EH 16 Jul; 80 SHIN 30 Jul; others off shore in quantities of 75-90 Jul and Aug.

**Greater Shearwater:** 1 Jul to very late Aug; 15 EH 16 Jul; 50 20 mi S Montauk 20 Jul; 150 SW Block I 29 Jul; others in small numbers.

**Sooty Shearwater:** mid Jun to mid Aug; 50 20 mi S MP 20 Jul; 77 EH 16 Jul; 17+ SW Block I 29 Jul; others in small numbers.

**Manx Shearwater:** small numbers 1 Jul



to late Aug; 38 EH 16 Jul; 12+ SW Block I; previous max 5.

**Audubon's Shearwater:** 2 50 mi S MP 31 Aug.

**Wilson's Storm-Petrel:** small numbers south shore 10 Jun - mid Aug; large concentrations off shore from MP: 200 20 Jul; 2500+ 29 Jul; 250 10 Aug; 25 26 Aug; other small numbers thru.

**Brown Pelican:** 14 DP 18 Jun; others south shore Breezy Pt to Shinnecock thru Jul; Quogue 10 Aug; max 25+ and 17, both groups flying east JBWE 1 Jul.

**Least Bittern:** near Goethals Bridge, SI 13 Aug.

**Cattle Egret:** JBWR early Jul.

**Turkey Vulture:** 8 SI landfill 25 Jul; CP 21, 24 Aug.

**Com. Eider:** nested Fishers I (EH) NYSARC, first NYS breeding record if accepted; MP 11-12 Aug.

#### HAWKS - ALCIDS

**Bald Eagle:** JBWR 1 Aug; imm MEB to SHIN 12-23 Aug; imm JBWR 26 Aug; SI landfill late Aug.

**Am. Kestrel:** nested on water tower on Water St, downtown Manhattan.

**Am. Golden-Plover:** sod fields, Riverhead 14 Aug thru; max 51 Riverhead 28 Aug.

**Black-necked Stilt:** Sore Thumb 10-17 Jun (AG, AL).

**Am. Avocet:** JBWR 13-20 Aug; Center Moriches 12 Aug.

**Willet:** western race (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*) PB 15 Jul (HM, AB, AnW, AG).

**Upland Sandpiper:** nested Gabreski Airport.

**Whimbrel:** JBWE 16 Jun, 1-3 south shore early Jul thru.

**Hudsonian Godwit:** JBWR 2-22 Jul; 2 Line Is 31 Aug.

**Marbled Godwit:** JBWR 22 Aug on; PB 24-27 Aug; MEB 27 Aug.

**RED-NECKED STINT:** Cupsogue

County P then east of PB 12-18 Jul (JF et al).

**LITTLE STINT:** east of PB 16 Jul (ES et al, ph RS).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** MEB 20 Aug; JBWR 29-30 Aug; others.

**SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER:** sod fields off Rt 105, Riverhead 25 Aug (ES) NYSARC, second NYS record if accepted.

**Curlew Sandpiper:** DP 18 Jun (AO); Westhampton Dunes 4 Jul.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** sod fields, Riverhead 25-27 Aug; Cutchogue 28 Aug.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** CB 9-11 Jun; PB 16 Jul; JBWR 30 Jul.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Meadow L, Flushing Meadow/Corona P, QUEE 12 Aug; Aquebogue duck farm 15-16 Aug.

**Red Phalarope:** 12 SW Block I 29 Jul. **SOUTH POLAR SKUA:** E 16 Jul (AB, HM).

**Pomarine Jaeger:** SE MP 19 Aug.

**Parasitic Jaeger:** small numbers from shore East Hampton and SHIN mid Jun-late Jul.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** sev on beaches from JBWR to MP.

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE:** 2 DP 11 Jun (AG, AL, AnW), first Jun NYS record.

**Gull-billed Tern:** nesting on marsh island off Oceanside; JBWE early in season; JBWR; possibly nesting on marsh islands adjacent to these sites.

**Caspian Tern:** 3 DP 17 Jun; JBWR 17-23 Jul; PP 5 Aug; PB 12 Aug; MEB 27 Aug; others.

**Royal Tern:** South Shore mid Jun on; max 40 PB 27 Aug.

**SANDWICH TERN:** PB 18-20 Jul; ad in basic plumage and with a leg band (ph) JBWR 26 Aug (MS).

**"CAYENNE" TERN:** (*Sterna sandvicensis eurygnatha*) PB 17-19 Jul (GF, JF, HM, SM, PH, JH, others).

**ARCTIC TERN:** 1st summer DP 10 Jun (AG, AL).

**SOOTY TERN:** (possible) 50 mi off SHIN 26 Aug (OB).

**Black Tern:** irregularly at various sites South Shore late Jun thru.

#### PIGEONS – WOODPECKERS

**Monk Parakeet:** 4 Sparrow Marsh, Brooklyn 10 Jun.

**Great Horned Owl:** APP nesting, A2.

**Chuck-will's-widow:** Sore Thumb 16 Jun (MV).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** Middle I early Jul thru.

#### FLYCATCHERS – WAXWINGS

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER:** Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area 29 Jun; JBWE 30 Jun.

**FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER:** Douglaston 1 Jun (SW).

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** 2 H 13 Jun; s side of Grumman property 4 Jul (DF).

**Warbling Vireo:** range extension to PP and SI, A2.

#### WARBLERS

**Golden-winged Warbler:** PP 19-20, 25 Aug; CLP 21 Aug; APP 29 Aug.

**"Brewster's" Warbler:** SI 31 Aug.

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** PP 27 Aug; SI 31 Aug; [Both are very early; Aug

reports should be documented carefully. *Highlights Editor*]

**N. Parula:** H 13 Jun; APP nesting, A2 (EM).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** PP 4 Jun.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** 2 H 13 Jun.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** PP 4 Jun; 5 H 13 Jun.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** H 13 Jun.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** CP 18 Aug.

**Worm-eating Warbler:** 3 PP 19 Aug; CLP 14 Aug; others.

**Kentucky Warbler:** nested Shu Swamp; APP 13 Jun, singing male Sands Pt 25 Jun, no evidence of nesting; CP 28 Aug.

**Hooded Warbler:** CLP 14 Aug.

#### TANAGERS – WEAVERS

**White-throated Sparrow:** singing male "white striped adult" Oldfield 1 Jul (DF).

**Bobolink:** fem PP 10 Jun; 4 Mount Loretto SI 19 Jul, A2; 60 PBP 21 Aug.

**Orchard Oriole:** nested PP; nested again Inwood P Manhattan; both A2.

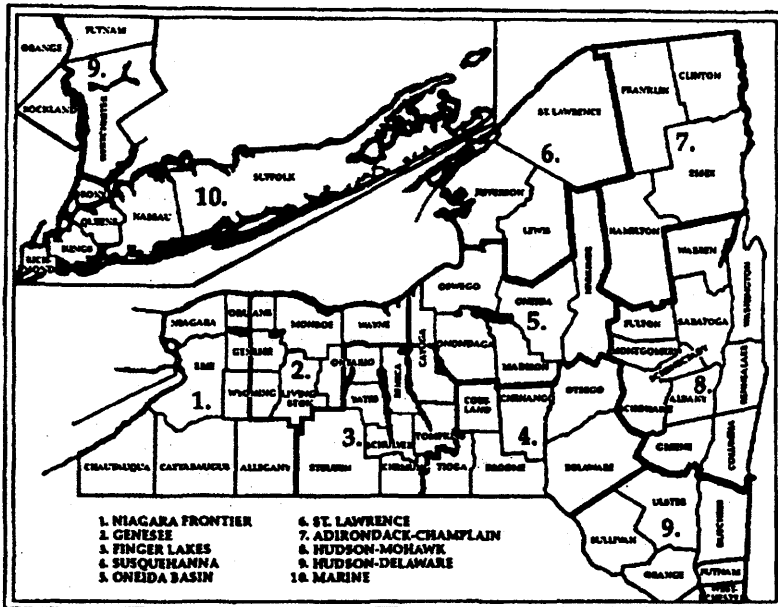
#### CORRECTION

**N. Saw-whet Owl:** CP should be 2-7 Apr not 2-7 May 2000 as previously reported.

[syschiff@ascensionet.com](mailto:syschiff@ascensionet.com)



## REPORTING REGIONS



Regional boundaries coincide with county lines, except at:

**Region 1-Region 2** in Orleans, Genesee and Wyoming Counties: the boundary is NY Route 98 from Pt. Breeze to Batavia, NY Route 63 from Batavia to Pavilion, and NY Route 19 from Pavilion to Allegany County Line.

**Region 2-Region 3** in Ontario County: the boundary is Mud Creek to NY Route 64, NY Route 64 from Bristol Center to S. Bristol Springs, and Route 21 from S. Bristol Springs to the Yates County Line.

**Region 3-Region 5** in Cayuga County: the boundary is NY Route 31

### REPORTING DEADLINES

**Winter Season:** December, January February  
Deadline is 7 March

**Spring Season:** March, April, May  
Deadline is 7 June

**Summer Season:** June, July, August  
Deadline is 7 September

**Fall Season:** September, October, November  
Deadline is 7 December

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