

REGION 2 — SOUTHERN TIER — PART 2

The season in the southern tier has not been too abnormal, although there were long intervals at times between rains. The northward migration did not progress too steadily, the birds coming more in intermittent

waves. While all the warblers were observed, a number of us missed several of them. The period covered by this report ended with heavy rains, as much as five inches falling in three days over the week-end of June 9.

LOONS — DUCKS:

There were two small waves of migrating Horned Grebes, on April 12th and 14th. The last Horned Grebe was observed on Keuka Lake May 1. The Common Loon has been rather scarce this spring, compared with other years. The writer drives daily a distance of 14 miles along Keuka Lake to his work in Hammondsport; I observed no Loons in March, altho others did, not more than two on any day in April, and only two for the month of May. No Red-throated Loons reported.

Our duck migration was about normal, practically all species indigenous to and migrating thru the area being present, including a few occurrences of the more rare White-winged Scoters and Old Squaws. A pair of Red-heads are spending the summer on Penn Yan marsh. The Canada Goose migration began the last of February and continued till the middle of April.

HAWKS — OWLS:

The local hawk population continues to diminish from year to year. I know of not more than three or four pairs of Red-tails nesting this season in the Keuka Lake watershed, and two pairs of Marsh Hawks. Only occasionally is a Cooper's or a Sharp-shinned Hawk seen. Sparrow Hawks are the most in evidence — a drive of several miles in almost any direction will reveal one or two pairs. Screech Owls are not common, but the Great horned Owl appears to be holding his own; any area of timber of any size harboring a pair. No Long-eared Owls reported.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES:

A pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers was located early in the summer a few miles west of Penn Yan — evidently nesting; a rare species for the region. The large colony of Cliff Swallows on the buildings of C. A. Sturdevant, near Prattsburg, continues to increase, and this season there are 152 nests in use. On June 17 Mr. Sturdevant was able to band 221 young swallows in about half the nests. He says the secret of the increase of Cliff Swallows lies in keeping the English sparrow population reduced to zero. Not a Red-breasted Nuthatch was reported this spring. A pair of Carolina Wrens appeared in the winter a few miles south of Geneva, and built a nest there this spring, while one has been singing for several weeks at Guyanoga, two miles north of Branchport. I heard this bird as recently as June 22. The unusual abundance of Cedar Waxwings all during the past winter has kept on into the summer, and Waxwings are everywhere.

VIREOS — WARBLERS:

For several years there has been a positive dearth of Warbling Vireos, as if they had been at a low point in a cycle; there is a definite increase this year, however, over the past few years, and they are almost common again. Areas where Chats and Golden-winged Warblers could be depended upon for sight records for a number of years past have apparently grown up past the point that forms suitable habitat, for the birds are no longer there. There are Chats, however, here and there, but Golden-wings were not reported. The writer had a Hooded Warbler on June 1, near his home, and on June

18 a Mourning Warbler was singing at Hammondsport.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:

For the past several years the Red-winged Blackbirds have been expanding their territory to include hay-meadows and upland fields in addition to marsh habitat. This year it seems that every farm has them in the fields and along the roads. I have only at the day of this writing been given a report that the Dickcissel is here again, at a point two miles west of where it was observed in 1950. Savannah Sparrows are much fewer this season, although a few pairs are found in certain numbers. The White-crowned Sparrow migration along Keuka Lake was slow and sparse, although back a few miles at higher altitudes they were numerous for a few days at the beginning of May. Other species of sparrows migrated in normal numbers.

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ED. NOTE: *The absence of reports from the Elmira and Watkins-Montour areas is evident. In order to have more complete coverage it is recommended that persons in these areas send Mr. Spiker their personal observations for inclusion in the Region 2 Report.—A.S.K.*
