

Summer weather was about normal as to temperature and moisture. September ran about one degree per day above normal in temperature, and had only about 20% of normal rainfall. Migrants seemed to start southward in numbers earlier than usual. By mid-August, the night skies were filled with the calls of southbound warblers. There seemed to be an unusually heavy crop of berries and seeds, especially wild grapes and dogwood.

LOONS — DUCKS:

Horned Grebe surpassed previous early date by two weeks, Sept. 23 at Grassy Point. Double-crested Cormorant not reported through September. White herons very scarce; only American Egrets seen, maximum of two. Wood Ducks apparently doing well; one flock of 14. Male Scaup in eclipse plumage, probably a cripple, at Grassy Point on July 22. Early date, Sept. 27, at Congers Lake for Ruddy Duck.

HAWKS — OWLS:

Early date, Sept. 10, at Blauvelt for Broad-winged Hawk. Fair hawk flight at Bear Mountain on Sept. 23, about 50 hawks and 30 Turkey Vultures.

Coot arrived early, Sept. 27 at Rockland Lake. Partial draining of one-acre pond near Grassy Point afforded best shorebirding in county's history. Second record for Pectoral Sandpiper, Sept. 23 (Dr. Hopper, Mrs. Hardman). Ringed Plover seen from Sept. 15 to Sept. 23, maximum of 6 birds. Semipalmated Sandpiper added to county list, Sept. 2 (Dr. Hopper), 20 birds, and seen through Sept. 23. Black-backed Gull seven weeks ahead of old early date, seen off Tarrytown Aug. 27 and many times thereafter. Common Terns slightly fewer than normal on Tappan Zee.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES:

More records for Alder Flycatcher in July than in any previous summer, all from marshy shore north of Haverstraw. Acadian Flycatcher identified by song, Sept. 10 (Deed). Red-breasted Nuthatches above normal in abundance from mid-August through September; new early date Aug. 17 (McClelland, Hoffman) at Lake Tiorati. Brown Creeper on breeding site in Palisades Interstate Park, July 29. Early date for Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Aug. 16.

VIROES — WARBLERS:

Warbling Vireo seems to be increasing in numbers at several restricted sites; new late date, Sept. 14, in Nyack. Both Brewster's (two birds) and Lawrence's Warblers seen at same time near Welch Lake, July 29, by Brown and Deed. New late dates, Sept. 27, for Tennessee Warbler, and Sept. 10 for Nashville Warbler. An early date, Sept. 10, for Parula Warbler. Best warbler waves on Sept. 10 and 16.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:

Orchard Oriole, hitherto noted only in spring, seen several times in late July near West Haverstraw. Scarlet Tanagers abnormally abundant on fall migration. Purple Finches numerous well before their usual peak in mid-October. Lincoln's Sparrow watched at leisure at 10 feet, Sept. 16 (Deed); only second record for county, first in autumn. Early date for White-throated Sparrow, Sept. 17.

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REGION 7 – NEW YORK

(PART 2 – NEW YORK, BRONX, AND WESTCHESTER COUNTIES)

The nesting season seemed normal for this densely populated urban and suburban area. Suitable breeding habitats constantly become more restricted, so that now almost the only places where a variety of nesting birds can be found are the larger parks and certain other public or semi-public reservations. Even these are being rendered less attractive to wild-life by the draining of marshes and wooded swamps, and the cutting through of express highways. July and August migration appeared average, with few land bird migrants until August 13 and 26 (Carleton, Mrs. Messing). Many birds were noted flying over Bronx and Van Cortlandt Parks on the nights of September 1, 2, and 26 (Komorowski). There were moderate to good flights of migrants in Central Park on September 8, 18, 27, and 30, and October 10 (Carleton Mrs. Messing). The September hawk flight was poor.

LOONS – DUCKS:

Black-crowned Night Herons roost throughout the summer, but are not known to breed. Least Bitterns still frequent the much reduced marsh in Van Cortlandt Park. Wood Ducks also bred there and in Bronx Park. A flock of 75 Black Ducks at Ferry Point Park on August 24 probably were birds that had bred across the Sound on Long Island, though scattered pairs nest in our area.

HAWKS – OWLS:

Red-shouldered Hawks nested at Van Cortlandt Park and at Grassy Sprain. Sparrow Hawks are still common breeders, and a pair apparently nested on a building in the financial district of Manhattan (Eisemann). This year there was no attempt at skyscraper breeding by Peregrine Falcons, but individuals (presumably from the Palisades eyries) could regularly be seen perched on favorite lookouts in the city. Migrating Broad-winged Hawks and a Marsh Hawk were noted over Grassy Sprain as early as August 5, and an adult Bald Eagle over Van Cortlandt Park on August 26. While small numbers of Hawks were observed moving over the Van Cortlandt Park ridge throughout September, there was no big flight. The best day there, September 18, produced a count of 180 hawks: Sharp-shinned 110, Red-shouldered 2, Broad-winged 8, Marsh 11, Osprey 13, Sparrow 32, unidentified Falcons 5. On September 23 a total of 65 hawks were counted at this locality, and 30 at Grassy Spring (Karlin, Komorowski, Maxwell, Russak). The great Broadwing flight apparently skipped the Van Cortlandt ridge this fall, but was noted farther west near Greenwood Lake, where some 2000 Broadwings were seen on September 20 (Brown).

Clapper Rails were still resident in the salt marsh near Ferry Point Park, probably their last year as breeders there, for the area is being made a bathing beach. Virginia and Sora Rails were regularly seen in Van Cortlandt Park from June through September.

The counties here covered no longer afford any really good shorebird area, but migrants will appear even inland when flats are exposed, as by the falling water level of a reservoir; thus on August 5 at Grassy Sprain Reservoir four species, 95 individuals were counted. At Ferry Point Park on Long Island Sound, there were on August 24 seven species, and on September 3,

five, including a Golden Plover (rare in this area) (Komorowski).

About 150 non-breeding Herring Gulls summered near Ferry Point Park. Laughing Gulls are evident throughout the summer on the lower Hudson and Long Island Sound, though not known to nest around New York City; by September 10 their number had increased to 150 at Ferry Point Park. Common and Least Terns were noted there on September 3.

A flock of about 50 Mourning Doves on September 3 at Ferry Point Park was large for this area.

SWIFTS - SHRIKES:

The usual breeding Swifts, Kingfishers, Woodpeckers, Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows, Corvids, Wrens, Catbirds, Thrashers and Thrushes were found in the area. Tree Swallows, though present in early June at Jerome Reservoir failed to breed (Brigham). Black-capped Chickadees did not nest this season in Bronx or Van Cortlandt Park or at Grassy Sprain.

Interesting Migrants: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher August 23 at Bronx Park (Komorowski); Migrant Shrike (rare hereabouts) August 24 at Ferry Point Park (Komorowski), September at Van Cortlandt Park (Karlin, Glasser); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, August 9, 22, 27 and 28 at Central Park (Mrs. Messing).

VIREOS - WARBLERS:

Of the Vireos the Red-eyed bred commonly, and the White-eyed, Yellow-throated, and Warbling locally, in this area. Yellow and Blue-winged Warblers, Redstart, Yellow-throat and Ovenbird still nest in the large parks of the Bronx. At Grassy Sprain in Westchester County, all of these species as well as the Black and White, Worm-eating, Chestnut-sided and Hooded Warblers and the Louisiana Water-thrush are regular breeders. The warbler migration was about average, without extraordinary waves. Species, such as Bay-breasted, Cape May and Tennessee, which are uncommon to rare in the spring, were seen in the city parks, as is usual, much more frequently and in larger numbers during September. The best Warbler flight in Central Park was on September 18, but there were good to moderate movements on September 8 and 27, with Connecticut Warbler on both days (Mrs. Messing).

BLACKBIRDS - SPARROWS:

Breeding of Icterids, Scarlet Tanager and the Finch tribe seemed normal for the area. The Bobolink, no longer breeding near the city, appeared at Van Cortlandt Park on September 1 and 2 in numbers between 200 - 300 (Komorowski); by September 27, Juncos were noted there (Komorowski). September 30 brought to Central Park Rusty Blackbirds and many Sparrows, including Lincoln's, and on October 10 there was another moderate movement (Carleton).

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REGION 8 - LONG ISLAND

Reports came through of a successful 1951 breeding season on Western Long Island, but along the South Shore at Moriches and Shinnecock the Tern and Skimmer colonies have reportedly been continually harassed by