

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

MRS. SOUTHGATE Y. HOYT

June and July were exceptionally dry throughout the Finger Lakes Region but reports varied from 'very hot and dry' in the Geneva and Waterloo areas, to 'cool and dry' around Avoca. Mrs. Carter reports that at Avoca a few severe storms toppled nests, and Robins, Chipping Sparrows and Red-eyed Vireos lost broods.

Late July was marked by an invasion of army worms, which was particularly severe in Tompkins and Chemung Counties. A few reports have been gathered on observations of birds eating the army worms. Helen Samson, of Horseheads, reported "Ovenbirds, Waxwings, Robins, Cardinals and several species of Sparrows and Warblers" feeding on the worms. Early one morning she saw the worms stopped by a pond, where they collected in masses, and Song and Chipping Sparrows were gorging themselves. In Yates County, between Coles Corners and Dundee, Mrs. Marie Darling reported the "largest flocks of Starlings ever seen there came into a field to feed on the worms." I was told by D. B. Harrington, of Ithaca, R. D. 1, that great flocks of Starlings came to his corn fields and 'did a better job on the worms than any spraying or dusting.'

LOONS — DUCKS: A lingering Horned Grebe was observed at Montezuma 6/6 by Walker. American Egrets were seen all summer in good numbers there, and two were also observed on 7/23 at a marsh north of Horseheads (K. Fudge and H. Quilliam).

A Snowy Egret was seen at Montezuma 6/1 (Hewitt). American Bitterns were somewhat scarcer around Avoca, where some former sites have been drained (Carter). A Least Bittern, the 2nd record for Chemung Valley area in 5 years, occurred regularly in June and July near the home of H. Samson, north of Horseheads.

A Whistling Swan observed at Montezuma, was first reported to me by Thurber (7/3), later by many others. According to Dr. Hewitt it was unable to fly.

Mallards and Wood Ducks were scarcer around Avoca this year (Carter). Black Ducks were plentiful at Montezuma. Ruddy Ducks were seen with young on 6/6 by Walker, at Montezuma, and Gadwalls also nested successfully. One brood of Canvasbacks was seen early by Smith, but later disappeared. No broods of Redheads were observed this year.

HAWKS — OWLS: Hawks in general did not seem abundant this summer, and in the Avoca area were scarcer (Carter). Loren Ward felt that Vultures were down in numbers. Although the Eagles were seen nesting earlier in the season, immature birds were not in evidence this summer.

In Schuyler County, the Ruffed Grouse seem to be slowly increasing, and Ring-necked Pheasants are more plentiful every year (Bardeen).

There were no Rails reported from Montezuma, and in the Elmira area, Coots seemed scarce (Welles).

A Ruddy Turnstone was observed at Montezuma 6/6 (Walker); 2 Wilson's Snipe at the Refuge 7/10 (Thurber); 2 Upland Plover at Norcutt's Corner 6/6 and 7/4 (Walker); Upland Plover and Solitary Sandpiper at Montezuma 6/1 (Ward); 2 Solitary Sandpipers were reported from Avoca 7/23 (Carter); Greater Yellowlegs were seen 6/6 at Montezuma (Walker), and on 7/24 early shorebird migrants there were represented by 10 Least Sandpipers, 15 Semipalmated Sandpipers and 2 Lesser Yellowlegs (Ward).

In the Elmira and Ithaca areas, Mourning Doves are increasing and seemed successful in nesting (Welles, Hoyt).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Hummingbirds were scarce around the Watkins Glen - Montour Falls area (Bardeen, Darling).

Chimney Swifts have increased around Avoca (Carter).

A Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen in and out of the nest hold at Montezuma on 6/1 (Ward).

Red-headed Woodpeckers show a slight increase in Elmira area, and for the first time are appearing in open areas, away from wooded sections (Welles). Walker reports this woodpecker "at long last", south of county home near Waterloo. No Redheads around Avoca this year.

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen and heard drumming at Montezuma 7/10 (Thurber).

Downies, Hairies and Flickers all seemed down in numbers around Avoca (Carter).

Two Acadian Flycatchers were found 'singing' in the middle of the Glen at Watkins Glen on 6/24 by Carleton. Alders were found to be plentiful around Ithaca (Stein), Waterloo (Walker) and Avoca (Carter).

A flock estimated at 5000 Bank Swallows was seen near Canoga 7/10 (Thurber), while Barn Swallows were gathering in unusually large flocks during July on wires in the hillside residential sections of Watkins Glen, and seemed to be catching flies (Van Vranken). Cliff Swallows were scarcer at Avoca (Carter). At a gravel pit north of Horseheads, it was noted that Starlings were nesting along with Bank Swallows (Samson).

White-breasted Nuthatches seemed down in number at Avoca (Carter).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: Vireos seemed present in usual numbers throughout the Region, although around Avoca, the Yellow-throated Vireos seemed fewer in numbers, the Warbling is reported as increasing (Carter).

Prothonotary Warblers were heard singing in four locations at Montezuma (reported by Ward).

The Mourning Warbler seems to be becoming established around Avoca (Carter).

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Four pairs of Cardinals were observed at Avoca (Carter) where this bird now seems to be established. Young Cardinals were brought to the feeder in Geneva 6/1 (Ward).

Goldfinches seemed unusually abundant around Ithaca (Hoyt). Indigo Buntings and Savannah Sparrows seemed scarce in the Avoca area, while the Henslow was absent there this year (Carter).

Aviana, Etna, N. Y.

REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

The Susquehanna Region, like so many other areas, was very warm and dry through most of June and all of July. The dryness seems to have had little if any effect on the birds.

LOONS — DUCKS: Pied-billed Grebes have been obvious by their absence from all incoming reports. Whether this is a result of an actual scarcity or merely a reflection of the decrease in observers after the spring migration is hard to know.

Great Blue Herons have again been absent from the Triple Cities area, but a few have been seen quite regularly near Deposit (S. Wilson).

Four female Wood Ducks with an aggregate of 25 young and two Blacks with 17 young were seen on one pond near Deposit July 3 (Wilson).

A female American Merganser was seen with 12 downy young on the Beaver-kill River between Peakville and Horton, Delaware Co. June 8 and presumably the same birds were seen June 13 at the same place (Wilson).

HAWKS — OWLS: Two Semi-palmated Plover were seen near Deposit June 1 (Wilson).

This has been another tent caterpillar and Cuckoo year. Both Cuckoos have been noticeably more common this year than last in the Triple Cities area (Triple Cities Naturalists' Club).

A Barred Owl was heard June 21 near Deposit (Wilson).

GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES: Nighthawks have been common in Binghamton, as usual, this year (TCNC). Mr. Wilson reports none at Deposit but he did hear them at Hancock June 9.

Two Alder Flycatchers were found near Deposit June 2 (Wilson), two near Binghamton June 20 (TCNC) and two more near Binghamton July 18 (Bemont). The four near Binghamton all gave the "fitz-brew" call, although the first two were in a dry hillside field and the other two close to a marsh in the Chenango Valley.