

VIREOS — WARBLERS: One of the Brewster's Warblers reported in the last issue was at exactly the same spot 6/5, but the following week the area had been graded with a bull-dozer to make a back yard for a new house, so the nest was never found. A Louisiana Waterthrush was seen feeding a young one near Norwich 7/ (S. White). Mourning Warblers have been present at two different stations around Norwich and seem to be nesting, although no direct evidence was found (Whites & Sheffields). One station has been occupied for the last two years.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Observations in this area bear out Mrs. Hoyt's comments in the last issue about the Redwing becoming more and more of an upland bird.

A Cardinal was heard singing at COOK'S Falls again 6/4 (Wilson). Savannah Sparrows seem quite common around Norwich this year, especially at higher elevations (S. White). A Slate-colored Junco was seen, and several more heard at Norwich 6/30 and two more at Guilford 7/7 (R. White).

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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

With the advent of another summer, further explorations for breeding birds in unworked areas of the region have been undertaken. On 12 June, a group of Onondaga Audubon Society birders in conjunction with the Oneida group visited the Rome Sand Plains, an area of pine (white, pitch, and red)—oak sand barrens, (which proved fascinating in its unexpected avian-botanical associations) between Sylvan Beach and Rome (centering on New London). Another trip (19 June) thru reforestation plantations and high altitude hemlock swamps in southern Onondaga and Madison Counties brought to light some interesting "northerners", previously only suspected as summer residents.

A small flurry of reports of western icterids in June is interesting, not because of the species in question, but because of the lack of weather conditions that might cause such strays.

As to weather, both June and July were hot and dry with the oppressive weather of July apparently acting as an even greater silencer of bird song than the prolonged, dry weather of July '54. Tent caterpillar damage was very extensive in the Selkirk-Sandy Pond area with severe but lesser damage north of Oneida Lake.

LOONS — DUCKS: Common Loon — 1 on 6/7 at Sandy Pond (Schaffner) is no doubt a summering bird. American Egret — no June or July reports. Canada Goose — 2 present thru June on Three-Mile Bay, north shore of Oneida Lake, may be summering birds or possible breeders. Brant — last date — 2, 6/9, Oswego Harbor (M. Rusk). Green-winged Teal — an adult on 6/10, Clay Swamp is late. (Is this bird a result of the N.Y.S. Conservation Department's duck-stocking program?) Wood Duck — reports indicate good brood success (eg. 1 with 11 young, Oneida — H. P. Nodecker).

HAWKS — OWLS: Bald Eagle — the newly discovered nest (March '55 — W. R. Spofford) along Lake Ontario produced no young this season. Ruffed Grouse — very, very few reports; no reports of nests or young. Florida Gallinule — judging by the number of immature birds, this species had a very good season, especially at Selkirk and Sandy Pond, Oswego County. Piping Plover — 1 on 6/2, Sandy Pond was prelude to the discovery (6/5) of a nest (a scrape in the sand) with 2 eggs on the North Spit, Sandy Pond Inlet. (M. R., H. P. N., F. S.) Woodcock — the sighting of 4 birds in 1 week in July at Camp Woodland, Constantia, an area where one normally sees 1/summer, seems to indicate general nesting prosperity for this species. Upland Sandpiper — the great increase in reports (Hoyt, Merritt, Aspinwall, Nodecker) of this bird is more likely due to increase in observation, not reproduction, but may be from both; an interesting account of a successful (and widely publicized) nesting of this Sandpiper comes from Mrs. H. W. Aspinwall, Rome. Solitary and Least Sandpiper — 4 of the former and 7 of the latter ushered in the fall shore-

bird flight on 7/5, a few days early. Knot — 1 on 5/2, 2 on 5/5, Sandy Pond were far below the '54 spring numbers.

Herring Gull — 2 pair with nests and eggs were photographed in the Ring-billed Gull colony on Long Island, Oneida Lake by J. L. Loomis and E. Steenberg, Endicott on 21 May, '55, a first breeding record for the region. Ring-billed Gull — in a letter from J. I. Loomis, Endicott, I have learned that the Ring-billed Gulls have been nesting on Long Island, Oneida Lake since, at least, as far back as 1951, which antedates Dr. B. P. Burtt's '54 date considerably. Bonaparte's Gull — 2 imm. present in a flock of 3000 Ring-billed Gulls on 6/2 (a late date), Sandy PoBnd. Common Tern — the majority of the Sandy Pond colony has shifted from the South Spit to the relatively undisturbed North Spit with apparently much better nesting success; the Oneida Lake colonies also had a favorable season. Black Tern — approximately 15 pair were nesting on the top of muskrat houses (6/10) Clay Swamp (just west of Rt. 11), Onondaga County; no Black Tern colonies are, at present, known east of Rt. 11. Black-billed Cuckoo — although Yellow-billed was reported regularly, the Black-billed was extremely scarce; 3 of the most active field workers reported **none** for June or July. Barn Owl — a nest with 5 eggs (subsequently 4 young) was found near Warners, Onondaga County; the 1st breeding record in 4 years. Saw-Whet Owl — an adult on 7/, Selkirk (E. Evans) is a most unusual date. Whip-poor-will — ceased singing remarkably early; no consistent calling after July 12 at Camp Woodland, Constantia; however, one was heard calling on the late song date of August 26.

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: Red-bellied Woodpecker — a single reported, 6/18; Plainville, Onon. Co. (Miss M. Bitz) would suggest a breeding bird. Red-headed Woodpecker — to the known breeding sites of this almost rare bird, a new one south of Elbridge, Onon. Co. (L. H. Hiscock) is added; however, 1 of 3 breeding sites at Oneida has been abandoned — "no June activity" (H. P. N.) Sapsucker — the presence of 3 young barely able to fly (end of July) at Camp Woodland, Constantia finally proves this bird as a breeder in that area (elevation 500'). Alder Flycatcher — surprisingly enough this was a common bird of the reforestation plantation (Highland Park) in southern Onondaga County, despite the coniferous habitat and the dryness of the hillsides; individual birds were heard to give both the "way-be-o" and "fitz-bu" calls with intermixed "greel" and "gray-teal" notes. Bank Swallows — M. Rusk reports these birds nesting in the eroded edges of a huge pile of coal dust in Oswego Harbor. Rough-winged Swallow — a common bird all along the heavily-walled Oswego River and reported nesting in hollow reinforcing and spill pipes in the Oswego Harbor breakwaters. H. R.) Cliff Swallows — the Oneida Lake North Shore colonies have continued their rapid decline; probably in a few years, it will be unknown as a breeder within 5 mi. of the lake.

Winter Wren — 3 singing birds in a beech-hemlock-alder brush patch on 6/20, Cazenovia seems to indicate breeding prospects. Short-billed Marsh Wren — no June or July records, a sad confirmation of this species' absence reported earlier. Hermit Thrush — this was perhaps the most abundant bird in the Rome Sand Plains; in several areas, dozens could be heard singing even at mid-day. Bluebirds — summer reports are very few; perhaps the snowstorm of 26-28 March '55 wiped out many of the local breeders since presumably most had returned by that time. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher — the Camillus Valley nesting of the spring report was abandoned by 6/7 and had been torn apart by 6/11.

VIROES — WARBLERS: Blue-headed Vireo — 2 singing males present thru summer at Camp Woodland, Constantia attest to the "northern" flavor of this area despite its proximity to Lake Oneida and its low elevation. Golden-winged Warbler — 2 new breeding sites; one, in Rock Cut Valley, Town of DeWitt, Onon. Co. (W. Schramm is of great interest for it is the first report of a site **southeast** of Syracuse. Nashville — 4 singing males reported, 2 each from Rome Sand Plains (6/12-Paquette, Ackleys) and Highland Park, Onon. Co. (6/5 — W.S.). Myrtle — a singing male could be found in practically every grove of mature white pine in the Rome Sand Plains (6/12); further, 8 singing males were located in less than a mile walk (6/19) thru the Highland Park Reforestation plantations; careful search of other hill country reforestation projects would undoubtedly show breeding Myrtles present. Black-throated Green and Blackburnian — though both were present in the dry mature pine woods of the Sand Plains, only the Black-throated Green could be found in the growing spruce and fir of the reforestation projects (Highland Park), despite an actual tree height difference of less than 8-10 feet.

Pine — a persistently singing male was the only one of this species observed in the Rome Sand Plains, though the extensive pine areas and several "suspiciously-Pine" songs heard would indicate more. Ovenbird — like the Hermit Thrush, very

common (80 in 2 miles of wood road) in the dry open pine-oak woods of the Sand Plains. Louisiana Water Thrush — 2 new breeding locales; 1 near Munnsville, Madison County (H.P.N.) — at a spot where 2 years ago, he found Winter Wrens with young; and 1 near Stokes Corner (north of Rome and Delta Lake) (Mrs. H. A.). Mourning — 1 male singing on territory (6/10 — Clay Swamp, Onon. Co.) behind a rifle range! (Dave Ackley). Hooded — 3 new breeding stations; 1 on 6/9, Drumlins, southeast edge of Syracuse (W.S.) is a recent invader, as this species was not present in that area 5 years previously.

ICTERIDS — FRINGILLIDS: Western Meadowlark — a bird repeatedly singing the song of this species was carefully watched for 20 min. in a cow pasture, corner of Rts. 104B and 3 near Selkirk; observer had opportunity to compare several times visually (no noteworthy difference except a faintly sandier back) and frequently compared audibly with nearby E. Meadowlarks (F.S.) Yellow-headed Blackbird — 1 well-verified report of a male at Lee Center, Oneida County on 6/7 (Mr. Max Olney fide Mrs. F. W. May); also an at-present unconfirmed but probably reliable report of a pair of this species at North Bay, Oneida Lake on 6/27 (Mrs. J. H. Peters).

Cardinals — since early August, a pair regularly present at Oneida (H.P.N.). Vesper Sparrow — common in the Rome Sand Plains, but only where bare sandy areas meet grassy swales; if the bare areas were absent, these sparrows were also absent. Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows — Grasshopper ceased singing on 7/23, but the Henslow's persisted until 8/23 (a late date), when song observations were terminated (W.R.S.). White-throats — 3 singing birds present in a high altitude swamp (6/19) near Cazenovia; also present in numbers in the heavy brush areas of the Rome Sand Plains; with such differences in plants and topography between these two areas, the habitat resiliency of this bird becomes obvious.

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REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

As in most places the weather for June and July was hot and dry. In Watertown it was the hottest July since 1921 with an average temperature 75.72 or more than five degrees above normal. The rainfall for June-July was only 2.33 inches which is 4.28 inches below normal. However, vegetation, in general, fared much better than might be expected and wildlife did not seem to suffer greatly. The first of frequent and heavy rains came August 7.

LOONS — DUCKS: What looked at first like a good year for the Double-crested Cormorants seems to have resulted in very few young being reared. Reports differ, but indicate interference by man. No reports of American Egrets. Another attempt was made to get Canada Geese to breed at Perch River Refuge, but most of them were young birds and not mated. There were two nests and three young, but the means used to keep the breeding birds there was not given. It was a very good breeding season for ducks in all parts of this region (J. Wilson). In late July about 15 Mergansers were seen in the river below Cranberry Lake. They were mostly young birds and probably American Mergansers.

HAWKS — OWLS: Virginia Rails were seen at Beaver Meadows and near Madrid. Three immature Upland Plovers were noted in the Town of Orleans in July. Yellowlegs and Least Sandpipers were seen on July 7 (J.B.B.). Solitary Sandpipers were reported July 12, and near Madrid July 29. An Adult Bald Eagle passed over Potsdam on June 15 and a young bird was seen at Perch River. Ruffed Grouse are very scarce (J. A. Blake).

WOODPECKERS — SPARROWS: Nests of Red-headed Woodpeckers were located near Gouverneur and Perch River Refuge (J.B.B.). Evening Grosbeaks stayed in Watertown to about the first of June, built a nest, but were driven away by Grackles. This is the first known recent record of an Evening Grosbeak nest in or near Jefferson County.

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