

REGION 10 — MARINE

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A fairly comfortable summer followed a cold spring, with sufficient rainfall to prevent drought and to nourish a heavy growth of weeds and grasses on abandoned farms and in waste places. By midsummer heavy seed crops were in evidence also in marshes and on sand-dunes along the ocean. Vegetation on the latter came through natural process and by planting after its almost complete obliteration by the hurricanes of the past two years. At the time of this writing (Sep 10) there have been no hurricane threats and consequently no reports of storm-driven waifs to our coast.

Phenomenal numbers of ducks occupied the Jamaica Bay Sanctuary in June which later produced nesting Blue-winged Teal and Shoveller — the latter a new breeding species for Long Island. The Jones Beach heron colony showed a tremendous increase this year. In a report sent by John Bull of Far Rockaway, a party of six or more observers on Jul 15 found an estimated 800 herons and egrets of five species on the Sanctuary grounds. There appeared to be a good crop of immature Common Terns and Skimmers on western Long Island. Among land-birds young Oven-birds, as well as other woodland dwellers, seemed quite independent of parental care in early July.

LOONS — DUCKS: There were very few late loons recorded and only one or two nesting Pied-billed Grebes. Wilson's Petrels were reported on several occasions from shore, with 200 counted at Westhampton Beach, Jun 10 (E. Daly, R. Grant). Gannets were still passing through in early Jun; no large flocks of Double-crested Cormorants in Moriches Bay to end of period.

Some 30 adult American Egrets, two immatures able to fly, and four downy young in the nest, were found Jul 15 at Jones Beach. Also present were an estimated 80-90 pairs of Snowy Egrets with 100 young, 40 pairs of Yellow-crowned Night Herons with 80 young and 30 pairs of Black-crowned Night Herons (J. Bull, I. Alperin, P. Buckley, et. al.) This constitutes the first breeding area of American Egrets for western Long Island and the second breeding record, a previous but unpublished one having come to me last year of two three-quarters grown young found in a nest Jul 9, 1955, in the same area (W. Larrabee).

A Jun 9-10 count of ducks at the Jamaica Bay Sanctuary included two Bald-pates, two Green-winged Teal, two Canvas-backs, about two dozen Scaup, seven pairs of Ruddy Ducks and two Red-breasted Mergansers (P. Buckley). Some were probably injured or crippled from the previous hunting season. Gadwall nested at Jones Beach Sanctuary pond again this summer, and a mother duck feigned injury to draw attention away from several young about ten days old as late as Sep 19 (J. Elliott, G. Rising). Three Wood Ducks were summering at Northport (E. Mudge).

HAWKS — OWLS: There were fewer reports of Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks on western Long Island. An adult Red-shouldered was noted at Mt. Sinai, May 19 with downy young in the nest (G. Raynor) and two Broad-winged Hawks were seen daily in July at Northport (E. Mudge). The Osprey in recent years has almost completely failed as a ground-nester on Gardiner's Island because of the increase of nesting Herring Gulls (R. Wilcox). Practically no south-bound falcons were recorded to the end of the period Aug 15.

One or two records came in of Ruffed Grouse; Bob-white was heard in many locations from Massapequa eastward. Few rail records, except for Clapper which was reported in good numbers, with eight to ten calling at Mt. Sinai (near Port Jefferson) May 30 (G. Raynor); nesting Florida Gallinule this summer at Jamaica Bay Sanctuary (E. Whelen). Fair numbers of shore birds came through in late July-early August. Roy Wilcox was back banding Piping Plovers on the Westhampton Beach sand-dunes in mid-May. Upland Plover was again on its nesting grounds at Westbury; a Hudsonian Curlew appeared at Jones Beach Jun 6; several reports since. Shore-birds became fairly numerous in late July and early August, but few interesting records or rarities were reported.

An estimated 600-700 Common Terns and about 100 Black Skimmers nested on an island near Moriches Inlet. Herring and Black-backed Gulls have increased tremendously in the last few years. Roseate Terns were reported this summer from five to six locations. A good flight of jaegers came through around Jun 10 both at Jones Beach and at Westhampton Beach. At Westhampton 20, mostly Parasitic, were chasing Common Terns (R. Grant). Great Horned Owl bred at Bronx Park with three young in the nest present to May 13 (P. Buckley).

SWIFTS — SHRIKES: There were no breeding records of Nighthawk turned in for the region. Least Flycatcher nested along the North Shore in the Manhasset-Oyster Bay area and June birds were reported at Manorville. Purple Martins were

plentiful at Seaford, and a colony was also noted at Riverhead (Queens County Bird Club). Four or five Carolina Wrens were reported at Wading River (Raynor) and one at Massapequa, Jun 16 (Mayer, Rose). A Mockingbird's nest, believed to be the first authentic record for Long Island for many years, was found at Roxbury on Rockaway Beach. On Jul 15 both adults were seen with the four young which were then able to fly well (numerous observers).

VIREOS — WARBLERS: Yellow-throated and Warbling Vireos were singing on nesting grounds in the Oyster Bay region; Parula Warbler was noted again at the Cutting Arboretum, Great River, into June, but, as with the two former years, no positive evidence of nesting was found. The Black-throated Green was back in its favorite haunts in the West Hills for about the 15th consecutive year; Pine Warblers were found at Commack; Louisiana Water-Thrush at Mill Neck and Cold Spring Harbor and Chat at Commack.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Bobolink was found at Babylon; no Orchard Orioles recorded Scarlet Tanagers were plentiful; Cardinal present into eastern Suffolk county (Wilcox); Grasshopper Sparrow numerous on Montauk downs and bred intermittently to Westbury. Henslow's Sparrow searched for without success in the Nepeague lowlands (Elliott). This species has become exceptionally rare, as has its associate the Short-billed Marsh Wren, as nesting Long Island birds. There was a good showing of Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows in the Moriches marshes — species that have been eliminated in many western Long Island areas due to fill. Vesper Sparrows were found in June at Commack (Mayer, Rose). The species was unsuccessfully sought after around extensive farms and grasslands around Syosset and the bird is becoming increasingly scarce in Nassau county.

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