

REGION 8—MOHAWK-HUDSON

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The summer period in the Schenectady area was generally cool and dry. The period high of 94 degrees was set on Jun 14; the low of 43 degrees was recorded five days later. June rainfall was considerably less than half the average, and that of July was about a half inch below normal. Precipitation continued below normal during the first half of August.

Among the better finds during the summer were a Duck Hawk, a Short-billed Marsh Wren, and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. In addition, some species showed interesting number comparisons in relation to 1955.

LOONS — DUCKS: An unusual summer record was that of a Common Loon seen at Mohawk Lock 7 on Jul 22 (Schenectady Bird Club). During June 1955, up to 90 or so Black-crowned Night Herons could be seen at Vischer's Ponds, but numbers this summer appeared to be down considerably. American Egrets did not put in an appearance locally until Jul 15, when two were seen at Vischer's Ponds (Meritt). A few others were recorded later in the month, and on Aug. 12 a compact group of 28 was seen at the Ponds (Hallenbeck, Meritt). Wood Ducks with young were reported both from Collins Lake, Scotia, and Vischer's Ponds late in July, but breeding waterfowl generally appeared to be scarcer this year than last.

HAWKS — OWLS: A Turkey Vulture was observed over Vischer's Ponds on Jun 17 (Foote). This constitutes the fifth or sixth local record this year; none were reported in 1955. An immature Bald Eagle was seen at Delmar on Jun 3 (Madison), and on Aug 8 a Duck Hawk was observed at the Schenectady County Airport (Bartlett). An Osprey was seen at Stony Creek Reservoir on Aug 5 (Foote). Ruffed Grouse continued to be relatively scarce. There were several reports of the Florida Gallinule. About eight Virginia Rails and four Soras were heard at Meadowdale Marsh on the very early morning of June 24 (Stone). There were several other reports of the Virginia, but no others of the Sora. A Coot was observed at Collins Lake on two occasions during June and again during July (Hallenbeck). On Jul 22 an Upland Sandpiper was seen near Scotia (Brown, Hallenbeck) and this species was also reported from Delmar during July (Sabin). The Solitary Sandpiper and Wilson's Snipe were reported late in the period. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo was first reported locally this year on Jun 2, when one was heard in the Karner pine barrens between Schenectady and Albany (Hallenbeck). The species was reported again in July, but it was decidedly less common than the Black-bill, which was itself not overly conspicuous. A Horned Owl was heard at Alplaus on Jun 21 (Heikamp). A red-phase Screech Owl was seen almost daily at East Chatham from Jun 4 through Jun 12; a young Screech Owl was also observed on the latter date (Radke). Three to five Barn Owls, the first reported locally this year, were heard in the Meadowdale region during the night of Jun 23-24 (Stone).

GOATSUCKERS — SHRIKES: Two Pileated Woodpeckers were observed flying over Vischer's Ponds on Jul 22 (Brown, Hallenbeck, Meritt). One or two Olive-

sided Flycatchers were heard in the Warrensburg area on Jul 14 (SBC). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen at Scotia on Jun 2 (Hallenbeck). Two small Purple Martin colonies were reported in the northern part of Schenectady County, and a larger colony, perhaps a new one in the area, was reported from Round Lake (fide Bartlett). A Brown Creeper was seen at the pond on Jun 24 (Hallenbeck, Meritt) and again on Jul 15 (Meritt). Although this bird is a common summer resident in the northern part of the territory, it is not common in the Mohawk valley. A Carolina Wren was present at Collins Lake, Scotia, but this summer, as last, there was no evidence of the species breeding there. A Winter Wren was heard near Thatcher Park on Jun 24 (Stone). On Aug 5 a Short-billed Marsh Wren was seen and heard at Vischer's Ponds (Foote): this species is a rare summer resident locally. Two completely albino Robins were reported. One was photographed by Mrs. Harry Winne at Rexford in late June, and another was seen at Delmar on Jul 17 (Madison). On Jun 16 a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen and heard at Vischer's Ponds (Meritt): this is the first local report of this species since 1951.

VIREOS — WARBLERS: The Blue-headed Vireo was reported on several occasions from Scotia during June (Hallenbeck). On Jun 3 a Blue-winged Warbler was recorded near Vischer's Ferry (Kaskan); surprisingly enough, this is the only local 1956 report to date. Golden-winged Warblers, however, seemed more common than usual. A Cerulean Warbler was seen at Gallupville on Jun 3 (Zimmer). Another Cerulean and two Worm-eating Warblers were heard near Thatcher Park on June 24 (Stone). Both these species were recorded there the following month by other observers. Following a very good May migration, Blackburnian Warblers appeared more common than usual in the Jenny Lake area, but Myrtles were apparently down in numbers there (Bartlett). The last spring report of the Blackpoll Warbler was from Loudonville on Jun 2 (French). The first "fall" Northern Waterthrush was seen at Vischer's Ponds on the early date of Aug 5. Two Yellow-breasted Chats were recorded in the Meadowdale area in late June (Hallenbeck, Meritt). This was the only period report for this species.

BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS: Bobolinks appeared more generally distributed this summer than last. A male Cardinal was present throughout the period in Niskayuna (Eddy), but I know of no evidence of the species breeding. A single male Evening Grosbeak was present at Gallupville as late as Jun 2 (Zimmer). On Jun 17 three pairs were observed at Jenny Lake (Bartlett). This species breeds not uncommonly in the Sacandaga Reservoir area. Henslow's Sparrows were quite widely reported, much more so than last year. In contrast, there were only two or three reports of the normally relatively common Grasshopper Sparrow.

Two May reports of the hybrid Brewster's Warbler were received too late for inclusion in the spring summary and so are noted here. On May 13 Rudd Stone and others observed one at Ravena, south of Albany. Another was seen on May 20 at East Chatham by Eleanor Radke. Corrections to the spring summary: The Blackburnian Warbler was first seen on May 1 (not on May 5, as reported). A Yellow-breasted Chat was seen in Albany during May by Allen Benton. This raises the spring count of warblers recorded from thirty-three to thirty-four (exclusive of the hybrid Brewster's).