

they were warm and well fed, and the merry chatter when they played among themselves. Later they developed an alarm note when they thought danger threatened. These are all notes accepted as common in all young chicks, but what is most interesting to report is a peculiar call that they have used in conjunction with the feeding call. It was tinkling, melodious, and sweetly shrill, strongly reminiscent of the song of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet. In fact, I cannot describe it in any other way. As the birds got older this call became more guttural but it was still recognizable as the "Kinglet" call. As I write this they are starting the fourth week of their visit with me. They are still active, curious, and flying about freely, although they are brought in each night. They respond to a low whistle and are a star attraction for all who chance to see them.

I have found nothing difficult about raising the birds so far, other than an intelligent appraisal of their needs as a species, and I hope to rear them to maturity. I have used medication in their drinking water when gaping indicated gape-worms, found that they are ninety percent vegetarians, noted the unusual song as described above, and best of all have found that a naturally very wild species not usually considered adaptable to hand rearing can be reared with care. I have noted the responses which I have concluded are adopted and those which obviously are inherited, and I shall report these and my success at rearing the birds to maturity at a later date. — Tom Lesperance, Keeseville

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON JUNE — AUGUST 15, 1958

JAMES K. MERITT

Observations during the summer season indicate that the period was quite similar to that of last spring. Most birds continued to be relatively scarce, and one can only hope that a successful breeding season will alleviate this condition to some extent. Throughout the state temperatures were below normal, and rainfall exceeded the average everywhere but in the extreme eastern section which missed some of the violent storms which came in from the west.

There was little evidence of any southern heron flight. Common Egrets were reported from most localities, but these reports indicate that the birds arrived late and in poor numbers.

Of interest, however, is the number of reports of the Red-headed Woodpecker. This species was observed in Regions 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7. A Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen near Rochester (on the Lake Road near Webster — O'Hara).

Fred Hough presents an interesting summary of bird life in the higher Catskills in his regional report. As he indicates, more thorough studies in some of these seldom visited areas, would probably yield interesting and informative results.

REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

ROBERT F. ANDRLE

The slight coolness of May was considerably exceeded during June when the average temperature departed 3.6°F from the normal. It was a fairly sunny month, however, and the clear nights contributed to the coolness with low minimum temperatures. Consequently Lakes Erie and Ontario remained quite cold until well into the summer. The only weather dis-

turbance of any severity was the squall accompanied by strong winds which occurred in the 25th and 26th. July was generally warm and dry except in the southern sections of the region where convectional storms caused thundersqualls, hail, and flash floods in several localities on July 10, 23, and 28. The month of August up to the end of the period was quite warm, temperatures averaging above the normals on twelve of the fifteen days. Sunshine was abundant, seven of the days having one hundred percent of the possible. Water levels in the region continued rather low, thus apparently attracting more than the usual number of shorebirds. Unfortunately for this report, however, the Canadian shore of Lake Erie, which is outside of the region, drew the most shorebirds and also the most bird observers. The general paucity of observations during the period makes it rather difficult to correlate bird activity with other phenomena or to recognize significant trends.

Loons — Ducks: Two Common Loons were observed on Lake Ontario near Lakeside on Jul 6 (Andrle), and a Lesser Scaup on Jun 22 in Buffalo Harbor (Filor) causes speculation as to whether this species is still nesting in the rapidly disappearing Tiffit Farm area. The first report of a Common Egret was of a bird near Jamestown on Aug 24 (Lenna). Several hundred Black Ducks, Mallards, and Blue-winged Teals were noted in the Oak Orchard Swamp on Aug 9 (Andrle), possibly indicating a good breeding season in this locality. Water levels in the State Management area of the swamp have been kept fairly constant and a number of duck nesting platforms have been erected and apparently successfully utilized. An observation of three Green-winged Teal at Oak Orchard Swamp on Jul 6 (Brockner) is of interest. To our knowledge no nest of this species has been found in our region.

Hawks — Owls: A Bald Eagle was seen in the Chautauqua gorge on Aug 12 (Anderson, Lehigh). Apparently a considerable amount of algae drifted onto the Lake Ontario and Lake Erie south and north shores respectively; this, together with the low water level, attracted shorebirds in good numbers. Although no other reports were received from Lake Ontario, an indication of their numbers for that shore perhaps was the observation, on Aug 2 two miles west of Lakeside on one small algae covered point, of 128 shorebirds of eight species (Andrle). These were mostly Semipalmated Sandpipers but also present were two Short-billed Dowitchers, 12 Pectoral Sandpipers, and 16 Sanderlings. A lone Black-bellied Plover at Irving on Jun 7 (Andrle) was a last spring migrant. Six Solitary Sandpipers at the Fish Hatchery on Chautauqua on Aug 12 (Mitchell) was an observation of a species which has been infrequently noted this year. On the very windy morning of Jun 26 a Least Tern was carefully watched among the many Black Terns off Erie Beach, Ontario (Schaffner, Brownsteins, Andrle) and was last seen just off the outer breakwater of Buffalo Harbor. This is believed to be the first definite record of this species for the Buffalo area. A pair of Barn Owls successfully reared two young on Tonawanda Creek Road just to the north of Buffalo during July (Wendlings et al.).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Belted Kingfishers appeared to be more numerous than usual in the region this summer. On Aug 10 at Athol Springs just south of Buffalo a Carolina Wren was reported (Csont). Evidently this wren is now nesting in several localities in the region. Noteworthy is the observation of four Short-billed Marsh Wrens near Alabama Jun 22 (Brockner). This species is quite local in the area and perhaps unfamiliar to many of our observers because of its scarcity and restrictive type of habitat. Closer searching and especially a more attentive listening for its song near damp grass meadows might be rewarded by the discovery of more of these interesting wrens. No Mockingbirds have been reported this summer in the region. One recalls their nesting near Batavia and Westfield in previous years. A most interesting find was a group of at least three Golden-crowned Kinglets on Jul 17 southwest of Ellicottville at 2300 feet elevation in a fairly extensive spruce-pine state forest plantation (Coggeshall). Cliff Swallows were reported from several localities south of Buffalo; 30 nests on Jun 14 near Markhams in northern Cattaraugus County (Mitchell et al.) was a fair sized colony.

Vireos — Warblers: In the same high area near Ellicottville individual Myrtle Warblers were noted on Jul 9, 17, and 23 (Coggeshall et al.), and a male Bay-breasted Warbler was there on the last date (Andrle et al.). No evidence of nesting

of either species was found but it will likely prove most interesting to search this promising area more intensively in future years. A Blackpoll Warbler remained until Jun 6 in Williamsville (Wendlings). There was no indication of a warbler migration up to the end of the period.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: On July 6 over 1400 Common Grackles were seen near Alabama (Brockners). This species was noted to be particularly common north and east of Buffalo earlier this year. A male Slate-colored Junco, which visited a yard in Athol Springs Jul, 15 and 16 (Csont), was interesting in that this species is usually restricted to higher elevations farther south in the region.

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REGION 2 — GENESEE

HOWARD S. MILLER

June and the first half of July averaged somewhat cooler and wetter than normal. The last month of the period averaged warmer and drier than earlier in the period. No excessive heat waves have occurred as yet this summer, the highest temperature recorded being 87°, which has been recorded several times. On June 25 a violent thunderstorm carrying wind gusts of over 100 miles an hour and extremely heavy rainfall occurred. This storm showed some characteristics of a tornado and did some damage to buildings and much damage to trees. The level of Lake Ontario continued to fall slowly during the period, but much of the exposed shore and marsh has become choked with a rank weed growth, making many places undesirable for many species of birds.

Grebes and herons have been scarce during much of the period, as has the Short-billed Marsh Wren. Shorebirds lingered in fair numbers late in the spring, and the fall flight has been about average so far. Among the more unusual birds recorded during the period may be mentioned the Snowy Egret, Whimbrel, Western Meadowlark, and Orchard Oriole, together with a late straggling White-crowned Sparrow and an even later Blackpoll Warbler.

Loons — Ducks: A Common Loon was seen Jun 1 off Sea Breeze (Kemnitzers) and another bird of the same species was seen Jul 10 at Manitou (Listman). No Pied-billed Grebes were reported during the entire period. A Double-crested Cormorant was seen Jun 5 at Manitou (Listman). Common Egrets have failed to pick up in numbers, only an occasional single bird being observed. A Snowy Egret which was reported late in May at Braddocks Bay was seen in the same general area Jun 1 (Listman). Black-crowned Night Herons and Bitterns were scarce this summer, although the former showed a decided increase during the last two weeks of the period. No Least Bitterns have been reported this year. A single Whistling Swan was observed along the west lake shore from Jun 7 to 15 (Allen et al.). Twenty-five Brant were observed June 2 at Manitou (Listman), and five were still present June 5 in the same area. Mallards were present in average numbers but Black Ducks seemed scarce. A number of pinioned Pintails and Redheads were "planted" in two or three places in the area, and gave bird watchers trouble in distinguishing them from typical wild birds. An apparently wild Pintail was seen at Ling Road Jul 26. A pair of Green-winged Teal seen at Braddocks Jun 14 (Starling, Miller) raises the interesting possibility that this secretive bird may have nested in this area. This species appeared in small numbers late in the period. Blue-winged Teal have seemed more common than usual this summer, while Wood Ducks have seemed down in numbers. Two American Widgeon were seen Jul 26 at Shore Acres (Listman et al.). A Lesser Scaup was seen Jun 11 at Manitou (Listman) and another or the same bird Jun 29 at Irondequoit Bay (Kemnitzner). A very late Bufflehead was seen Jun 1 at Sea Breeze (Kemnitzner), and a Ruddy Duck was observed on Irondequoit Bay Jul 13