

Some Brief Tug Hill Plateau Observations — The Tug Hill Plateau, located largely in northeastern Oswego County and the southern two-thirds of Lewis County, has long been an ornithological unknown. A recent trip there (10 June 1957) resulted in a brief survey of the area and the formation of plans to explore it more thoroughly in the future. Access was achieved by a 20-mile-long lumber road that takes off from Route 12, north of Houseville, between Turin and Lowville; the first six miles of this were covered by car, the remaining 14 on foot. Briefly, the terrain is that of very low, long irregular ridges with alternating swamp and bog areas; the majority of the drier ridge area is covered with a mixture of second-growth northern hardwoods (Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, White Birch), while the finger-like wet areas are either Tag Alder grass swamp or Black Spruce-blueberry bogs. The bogs and ridges are rimmed with a heavy growth of Hemlock and Gray Birch, a situation particularly attractive to the numerous warblers. Sluggish streams meander back and forth across the road but few areas of extensive (one square mile or more) swamp or bog abut directly on the road.

The counts below are done on a "singing male" basis along the 14 miles of road. This observer was particularly impressed by the abundance of singing male warblers and the marked paucity of woodpeckers and hawks in that area. Interesting to note also was the greater abundance of the White-throated Sparrow as compared to the Slate-colored Junco.

Goshawk — 2 adults, 3 young in nest; Chimney Swift — 30, usually around the unused hunting cabins; Hairy Woodpecker — 5, a nest; Downy Woodpecker — 2; Crested Flycatcher — 15; **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** — 2; Traill's Flycatcher — 55; Least Flycatcher — 30; **Olive-sided Flycatcher** — 4; Catbird — 65; Wood Thrush — 3; **Hermit Thrush** — 32; **Swainson's Thrush** — 38; Veery — 30; **Solitary Vireo** — 28; Red-eyed Vireo — 40; Black-and-white Warbler — 6; Nashville Warbler — 5; **Parula Warbler** — 2; Magnolia Warbler — 75; Black-throated Blue Warbler — 58; **Myrtle Warbler** — 18; Black-throated Green Warbler — 78; Blackburnian Warbler — 65; Chestnut-sided Warbler — 145; Ovenbird — 45; Northern Waterthrush — 52; Mourning Warbler — 24; Yellow-throat — 75; Canada Warbler — 64; Redstart — 46; Scarlet Tanager — 27; Rose-breasted Grosbeak — 20; Indigo Bunting 15; **Purple Finch** — 46 (1 nest); Goldfinch — 50; **Slate-colored Junco** — 35; **White-throated Sparrow** — 85; Swamp Sparrow — 38; Song Sparrow — 90.*

Single individuals of the Red-tailed Hawk, the Red-shouldered Hawk, and the Broad-winged Hawk were seen. A pair each of Mallards, Black Ducks, and Wood Ducks were noted; this observer considered it rather unusual to find ducks still paired this late in the season. The complete absence of Yellow Warblers was most remarkable as several areas of willow scrub and campside areas seemed suitable habitat.

This large block of northern avifauna may well serve as the source of those birds — e. g. Blue-headed Vireo, White-throated Sparrow, Myrtle Warbler that sporadically appear to breed close to the north shore of Oneida Lake and near the eastern end of Lake Ontario. The descending slope of the land and the direction of stream flow with the concomitant fingers of streamside Hemlock, alder, and larch tend south and west and could serve as submarginal habitat and channels for the spread of these northern species.

An earlier and particularly interesting account of birdlife in this area has been written by R. Arbib in the Linnean Newsletter, Vol. 7, #6, 1953.

***Bold face** numbers indicate high counts of certain species; **bold face** names indicate more unusual "northern" avifauna.

Fritz Scheider, 151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse 8, New York