

Yellow-breasted Chats. Guthrie noted that in the Keuka area he could find only one where 7-9 used to be, and suggests that change of cover in the area is responsible.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Bobolinks were spotty — noted as normal or above normal in some areas, considerably below normal in others. Meadowlarks were very abundant everywhere, as were Redwings. This writer feels that the less said about the tremendous increase in Grackles the better! Only Bob Ficken, doing graduate research on their behavior, was happy about it. Elsewhere observers bemoaned the way they took over feeding stations, heckled smaller nesting species, and at Sapsucker Woods they were several times seen chasing smaller birds and knocking them to the water or ground — even a Spotted Sandpiper on one occasion (Hoyt). Cardinals increased around Geneva and Waterloo. Rose-breasted Grosbeak families were certainly not conspicuous in early August, as they are some years. Indigo Buntings were more plentiful at Watkins Glen and around Geneva in normal numbers in the Ithaca area. There were scattered reports of resident Purple Finches, including a "first" in the 12-Mile Creek Valley, where one was noted singing on Jun 24 (Carter). The bird has not been known there before in summer. Goldfinches seemed unusually abundant. Rufous-sided Towhees were in lower numbers around Waterloo (Walker), and field-nesting sparrows continued scarce throughout the region, except for Field Sparrows which had picked up in numbers this year at Geneva. Fudge reports Juncos nesting near Elmira. The Clay-colored Sparrow was still singing in the same vacant lot in Ithaca the end of July.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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The weather for the whole period has averaged warm and dry. The dryness was especially pronounced from June 28 to July 29, but serious drought conditions were averted by a fairly heavy rain July 30. There were eleven days when the temperature in Binghamton reached 90 degrees or higher in contrast to only one such day last year. There is considerable doubt about what effect, if any, the weather had on the bird population but it is perhaps reasonable to blame the warm weather for one of the worst cases of "summer doldrums" to affect the bird watchers of the region in the last few years.

Northern species were again fairly well represented in the reports from Chenango County but not quite as well as last year. Instead the Oneonta — Cooperstown and Deposit areas produced their own northern records, the former Red breasted Nuthatch and Sapsuckers and the latter Loon and White-throated Sparrows. Those species that showed the sharpest population losses last year showed only a moderate recovery. New Yellow-breasted Chats have joined the list of species at a low ebb for reasons that are not apparent on a local basis. The beginning of fall migration was signalled by a few shorebird records and an Olive-sided Flycatcher, but perhaps the most interesting and significant report was that of a King Rail near Sherburne.

Loons — Ducks: An immature Common Loon spent most of July on Oquaga Lake, near Deposit, and became quite sophisticated about motor boats, water skiers, etc. (S. Wilson). There have been more than the usual number of summer records of the Great Blue Heron and from several widely separated parts of the region. At two localities, Oxford (A. Stratton) and Sherburne (R. & S. White), they were seen repeatedly but only one at a time and no breeding record. A Common Egret was at Boland's Marsh, north of Binghamton, Jun 28 (R. & M. Sheffield), and there was an undated record of five or six feeding along the Susquehanna River at Owego (M. White). Green Herons seemed low in numbers and there were no Black-crowned Night Herons reported at all. Two broods of Mallards were produced on a small marsh at Endwell that is dissected by two busy highways and a railroad and is

sprinkled with large illuminated billboards (L. Bemont). Successful Wood Duck nestings were reported at Deposit, Sherburne and Vestal.

Hawks — Owls: Nine Turkey Vultures were seen in one flock at Hancock Jul 31 (S. Wilson). Accipiters and buteos were all scarce and Marsh Hawks, incredibly, were unreported during the period. At least one pair of the Bobwhites released by the Broome County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs was able to raise a brood of young near Choconut Center, north of Johnson City (R. & S. Sheffield). Ring-necked Pheasants seemed more common than they have in several years around Binghamton. A King Rail was seen in a marsh near Sherburne Jul 24 (S. White). The same marsh produces a Virginia Rail record "nearly every" visit. An adult Common Gallinule and two immatures were seen at Sherburne Jul 24 (R. & S. White), and on the same day an adult and four or five immatures were at Vestal (N. & E. Washburn). A Semipalmated Plover was at Norwich Aug 2 (R. & S. White). Killdeer continued to be less common than normal. Woodcock were reported more frequently than in the past but it was due, primarily, to better coverage. Common Snipe were reported regularly from Sherburne during June and July (R. & S. White). A Solitary Sandpiper was at Sherburne during Jul 25 (R. & S. White), another was at the South Otselic Fish Hatchery Jul 26 (Whites), and still another was at Whitney Point Aug 9 (R. & M. Sheffield). A Greater Yellowlegs was at the South Otselic Fish Hatchery Jul 26 (Whites) and a Lesser Yellowlegs was at Whitney Point Aug 2 (Sheffields). Three Pectoral Sandpipers were at the South Otselic Fish Hatchery Jul 19 (Whites), and three Baird's Sandpipers were at Sherburne Jul 24 (Whites). Yellow-billed Cuckoos have been very scarce, but Black-billed Cuckoos were decidedly common around Binghamton. A Screech Owl near Choconut Center Jul 29 (Sheffields) was our first 1959 record. A Barred Owl was heard at Oxford Aug 12 (A. Stratton).

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: A Red-headed Woodpecker was at Newark Valley Jul 12 (L. Dean). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reportedly had considerable success in nesting at Oneonta (J. New). At Endwell a female Hairy Woodpecker with one young of her own was seen feeding young Downey Woodpeckers with suet a number of times (F. Linaberry). Phoebe's have made some recovery from their low of last year but are still far from normal. Traill's Flycatchers seem to be increasing every year and this year produced one of the biggest increases so far. Least Flycatchers were rather scarce. There were no summer records of Olive-sided Flycatchers at Norwich this year but a fall migrant was near Choconut Center Aug 10 and 11 (Sheffields). Another colony of Cliff Swallows was discovered at Union Valley, in Cortland Count, Aug 1. There were at least 80 birds there on that date (Whites). At Homer a previously unreported colony of Purple Martins was found, making a total of three active colonies known in that locality (J. Gustafson). A Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen at Cooperstown Jun 26 (S. White), and one was at Norwich Jul 11 (Whites) at the same place as last year but there is still no definite breeding record. House Wrens have still not completely recovered from last year's low. A Carolina Wren was at Deposit Jul 30 (S. Wilson). Short-billed Marsh Wrens are now known to occur in three spots around Sherburne (Whites). Another new station was discovered at Whitney Point Aug 9 (R. & M. Sheffield, L. Bemont). Hermit Thrushes seemed a little more common than last year at both Binghamton (Triple Cities Naturalists' Club) and Oneonta (J. New). Near Choconut Center Bluebirds have bounced back from last year's low amazingly well (Sheffields) and at Oneonta "at least a few — were fledged this year" (J. New). At Homer after their first brood failed a pair successfully fledged a second. These are the first reported nestings in that area in several years (J. Gustafson).

Vireos — Warblers: Black and White Warblers didn't show much improvement over last year's low. Golden-winged Warblers continued to be fairly common and Blue-winged Warblers rather scarce in the Binghamton area. There was still only one known breeding pair in the area of the latter species. A Myrtle Warbler was at Norwich Jul 11 (Whites). Yellow-breasted Chats have been much less common than usual all summer.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: A male Scarlet Tanager that had just started moulting was seen feeding a young one Aug 15 near Binghamton (Sheffields, Fisk). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks appear to have been less common than usual. A Pine Siskin was still at Deposit Jun 1 (S. Wilson). Slate-colored Junco's were again found at Norwich (Whites) and White-throated Sparrows were found at Pharsalia (Whites), Deposit (S. Wilson) and Oxford (A. Stratton).

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