

Wichman's Marsh, Port Kent. Black Ducks appeared to be down in numbers along Lake Champlain, but on inland ponds and lakes they were normal or above normal in numbers. Large concentrations of mergansers were noted in the Tupper Lake area as early as Jun 20 (Amstutz). Also noted there were a female and eight young Spruce Grouse on Jun 19. There appeared to be no change in the breeding population of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Five Black Terns were at Tupper Lake late in the period, an apparent first record for that locality.

Goatsuckers — Sparrows: Kingbirds seemed to predominate among the fly-catcher group, but the Yellow-bellied (one), and Olive-sided were reported from Tupper Lake. Rough-winged Swallows were about equal to last year's numbers. I was suprised that I noted no Cliff Swallows in the Keeseville area this summer; I had previously reported that this species seemed to be becoming scarcer locally. One male and two female Purple Martins occupied a local nesting house and both females reared young, and indication of polygamy among our feathered friends.

I noted Bluebirds in encouraging numbers this summer. As soon as this numbers increase became apparent, nesting boxes were put out for these birds and they were quickly taken over. I banded more Bluebirds this summer than during the previous ten. Catbirds, Wood Thrushes, Swainson's Thrushes, Gray-cheeked Thrushes, and Hermit Thrushes were all represented locally but certainly not to the degree of previous years.

The nesting site of the Mourning Warbler was found near Tupper Lake on Jun 9 (Amstutz). I have seen this bird near Keeseville the last several years but was not successful in locating a nest. Two Wilson's Warblers were also reported from Tupper Lake, and the locally rare Prairie Warbler has been seen near Keeseville. Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins were observed in numbers in the Tupper Lake area (Amstutz) early in the period.

Keeseville

REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

JAMES K. MERITT

The big news this summer was the weather. It was a real scorcher and there was little rainfall to bring temporary relief. In brief, it was miserable.

I am certain that I am not the only regional editor to have difficulty in collecting summer records. After the spring migration is over, all but the most enthusiastic observers put away their binoculars until the fall. And the weather this summer was certainly no inspiration to get out. Be that as it may, the period did not pass without a few records and observations of interest. Not unexpectedly, these involved "southern" birds for the most part.

Coverage of the entire region continues to be far from adequate. I would much appreciate reports from such areas as the northern Catskills, Fulton County, and the Lake George vicinity.

Loons — Ducks: Two Common Egrets seen at Vischer Ponds on Jun 21 were the first reported locally this year (Schenectady Bird Club). The appearance of these birds this year was early; they normally do not arrive until early to mid July. This early appearance did not indicate a heavy incursion, as the period's high count for this species was the 11 at Vischer Ponds on Jul 19 (Hallenbeck). Common Egrets were at Stockport Station, along the lower Hudson, beginning the week of Jul 13 (Alan Devoe Bird Club), and three were noted at a farm pond at Lebanon Springs on Aug 5 (Radke). Black-crowned Night Herons seemed definitely scarce in relation to previous summers, but Green Herons were about normal. The chief attraction among the heron family this summer was the three immature Little Blue Herons first seen at Crescent Reservoir on Jul 19 (Hallenbeck). The birds were still present at the end of the period. This species is by no means seen in this area each year, and when the species does occur usually only one individual is represented. Least Bitterns were unreported this summer.

Five American Widgeon were at Crescent Reservoir on Aug 13 (Eddy, Hallenbeck).

These were the first southbound transients in this group, and their appearance was early. Reports of other ducks were confined to the common summer resident species (including the Redhead, which has been released in several local areas by the state conservation department). During July there were at least three successful Wood Duck nestings at Tuttle's Marsh, Columbia County; 23 young were counted trailing three adult birds.

Hawks — Owls: As usual Turkey Vulture reports were confined largely to the southern part of the region, and they became increasingly common there late in the period (ADBC). However, a Turkey Vulture was seen just west of Albany on Jun 21, and two were noted at Hadley, in the Adirondack foothills, on Jul 29 (Stone). A group of eight was observed at Gallupville on Aug 10 (Zimmer). A Sharp-shinned Hawk was in the Scotia area on Jul 23 (Hallenbeck), and another was at New Concord on Aug 13 (Radke). Other hawk reports were not out of the ordinary.

The Bobwhite was commonly reported in Columbia County (ADBC), and the species was reported in July in the New Salem area (Johnston, Linch). Another was heard in Scotia on Jul 29 (Meritt). At the beginning of June there were ten young (and one unhatched egg) in a Ruffed Grouse's nest at the Alan Devoe Bird Club's Columbia County sanctuary. A lone Coot seen near Scotia on Aug 1 marks the period's only report (Hallenbeck). Common Gallinules seemed to be quite regularly reported, and a Virginia Rail was noted on Jun 28 (Hallenbeck).

Five Upland Plovers were seen near Meadowdale on Jun 21, and it seems probable that the birds were on their breeding grounds. The five may well represent a family (Stone). Six Woodcock were flushed at New Concord on Jun 26 (Radke), and one of these birds was seen in Niskayuna on Jul 17 (Eddy). A Greater Yellowlegs was seen at Castleton on the unusual date of Jun 21 (Stone), and one of these birds was seen near Rexford on Aug 13 (Eddy, Hallenbeck). Solitary Sandpipers were seen at Canaan after Jul 15 (Gokay), and others were reported along the Mohawk near Schenectady the following week. A Lesser Yellowlegs and several Least Sandpipers were seen near Mohawk View on Jul 22 (Hallenbeck), and the latter birds were still present on Jul 26 (SBC).

Black-billed Cuckoos were rather commonly reported, especially in the southern part of the area, and the Yellow-billed was generally noted to a somewhat lesser degree. The Screech and Great Horned Owls were the only two members of that group to be recorded.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Pileated Woodpeckers were reported in average numbers at best. The Red-headed Woodpecker first seen in Scotia on May 19 continued to be present there until at least Jul 19 (Hallenbeck). Another Red-headed Woodpecker was observed in Niskayuna on Jun 23 (Kaskan), and still another was noted at Amsterdam on Jun 26 and 27 (Fitzgerald). The pair previously reported near Gallupville was still present, at least during the beginning of the period, and all indications pointed to breeding. This is an unprecedented number of reports for this species in this region.

A probable Acadian Flycatcher was noted in the Albany area on Jun 3 and for several days thereafter, but identification could not be confirmed. There were two June reports of the Olive-sided Flycatcher. One was at Red Rock on Jun 16 (Smilow), and another was noted near Meadowdale on Jun 21 (Stone). Phoebe's were reported in encouraging numbers.

Brown Creepers stayed at Ghent throughout July (Erlenbach), and the in-and-out Caroline Wren was noted at Scotia on Jul 15 (Hallenbeck). A pair of Mockingbirds nested at Chatham Center in July (Ramsdell); to my knowledge this constitutes the first such nesting report for this region. As of Jul 16 there were two young in the nest. The Mockingbird was also reported at Ghent on Jul 28 and 29 (Erlenbach). These records are additional evidence of the northward push of this species which has become so evident in recent years in central and northern New Jersey. Bluebird numbers were still not up to normal levels by any means.

Vireos — Warblers: Both the Cerulean and Worm-eating Warblers were reported along the Indian Ladder trail at Thacher park on Jun 21 (Stone), and the Cerulean Warbler was also noted at Gallupville on Jul 7 (Eddy, Mabb). The Golden-winged Warbler was reported through Aug 4 at Nassau (Turner), and the Blue-winged, one of the rarer summer warbler residents locally, was seen quite regularly there (Shineman, Turner). Those two hybrids, the Brewster's and the Lawrence's, continued to be spotted at Nassau throughout most of July. On the

occasion the Lawrence's was seen feeding a Cowbird, while both a Blue-wing and a Golden-wing were seen feeding another Cowbird. The two nests that were constructed by the Lawrence's and Brewster's Warblers were subsequently collected and presented to the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell. Blackburnian adults were feeding young at Red Rock on Aug 1 and 3 (Smilow), and a Bay-breasted Warbler was at Nassau on Aug 1 and 7 (Turner). A Nashville Warbler was seen in Niskayuna on Aug 13 (Eddy); this particular bird was so excited about getting somewhere quickly that it hit a window. It was stunned and picked up, but it quickly recovered.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Another southerner which nested locally this summer was the Orchard Oriole. This species was found breeding at Delmar, and as of Jul 26 there were still young in the nest (fide Ralph Palmer). Purple Finches were reported nesting in July at several Columbia County localities. The Pine Siskin was in Amsterdam at least until Jun 15, which is late date for that erratic bird (Fitzgerald). There were quite a few reports of nesting Cardinals from various areas. Not unexpectedly, these reports are becoming more frequent each year. Henslow's and Grasshopper Sparrows were noted in the Meadowdale area on Jun 21 (Stone), and there were other reports.

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REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

FRED N. HOUGH

For the lower Hudson Valley it was a summer of frequent showers and warm and humid weather. Birding, of course, was at a minimum during this vacation season, but nevertheless field observations were sufficient to give us at least a fair picture of the nesting status of our local birds.

Downstate, particularly in Rockland and Westchester Counties, many "old time" birders are witnessing a shifting and changing of nesting populations due to the development of human communities which has been rapidly changing the face of the countryside since World War II. This means a destruction or displacement of nesting sites, a shifting of nesting species, and a change in the birdwatcher's expectations. In the upper counties this condition is not as pronounced as in the more populated districts of the region. The Bluebird, for instance, has been forced to move on in many areas formerly occupied, its nesting site destroyed by large scale development and land alteration. It is one bird that would respond to nesting boxes placed in fairly open areas of available countryside. This would be a worthwhile project for bird groups. All in all, if we can see amidst the progress of human affairs, it would appear that the nesting season was about normal with the usual ups and downs of certain species.

In pursuit of their Catskill Mountain bird studies Fred Hough and Dan Smiley added another trip on June 13 and 14, this time to Peekamoose Mountain (3843') in Ulster County. Wind, rain and cold (trace of snow) limited the planned scope of activity on this trip, but the prime objective of working out the status of Bicknell's Thrush was, however, accomplished. Peekamoose is topped with a predominant stand of balsam, not an extensive tract, but none the less large enough to form the necessary prerequisite of habitat attracting Bicknell's Thrush. Several birds were noted and one was heard singing at 31 degrees on the 14th in an icy wind whipping violently through the trees over the top. The establishment of Bicknell's on this mountain may well represent the southern extent of its known breeding range.

A Hummingbird was also seen atop Peekamoose, visiting the blossoms of the common Azalea, and it seemed quite out of place.