

Vireos — Warblers: On Jun 5 four different singing male Solitary Vireos were found near Whitney Point (M. Sheffield, V. Misner). Golden-winged Warblers continue to be fairly common around the Triple Cities but unreported in most other parts of the region. Jul 17 three different Brewster's Warblers were seen, one a young bird being fed by a Golden-wing (M. Sheffield). The old Blue-winged Warbler station near the south side of Binghamton was occupied during the breeding season again and on Jun 20 one was seen in a spot about five miles north of Binghamton where they were reported about six years ago but not since (L. Hevey). Myrtle Warblers were reported to be summer residents at the Pharsalia Game Management Area (P. Kelsey). Two Black-throated Green and four or five Blackburian Warblers, all singing males, were found at Whitney Point Jun 5 (M. Sheffield, V. Misner). Ovenbirds seem to be somewhat less common than last year around Oneonta (R. Burland). A family of Northern Waterthrushes was observed at Ludlow, near Oxford, Jul 8 (A. Stratton) and another was singing at Neahwa Park in Oneonta Jul 31 (R. Burland). A pair of Mourning Warblers settled in a woodlot near Homer (J. Gustafson). They were also reported at Pharsalia (P. Kelsey, R. & S. White). Yellow-breasted Chats appear to have recovered from last year's low and are again moderately common, locally, in the Triple Cities area. A Hooded Warbler was found about five miles north of Binghamton Jun 20 (L. Hevey). It was not seen again in spite of several special efforts to find it.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: An estimated 200,000 Starlings, Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds started roosting in an abandoned orchard in Cortland, apparently for the first time, this year about Aug 10 (Wilson). Scarlet Tanagers were scarce at Oneonta after spring migration but seemed normal in other areas. The increase in Cardinal populations continues to attract attention. There are now five or six known pairs in Oneonta (R. Burland). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks seemed especially common at Newark Valley, Cortland and Oneonta. At Cortland Indigo Buntings also seemed common, particularly in August (J. Gustafson). Grasshopper, Henslow's and Vesper Sparrows all seemed slightly more common than last year in the Triple Cities area. There were more than the usual number of summer records of Slate-colored Juncoes. They were seen at Pharsalia (R. & S. White), Whitney Point (M. Sheffield, V. Misner) and Binghamton (L. Harvey) and two nests were found in near-by Pennsylvania (N. & E. Washburn) to go with the one at Candor reported in the last issue. There were also several reports of White-throated Sparrows including a nesting pair at Homer (J. Gustafson). At one point in the Pharsalia Game Management Area four could be heard singing every visit (P. Kelsey). Swamp Sparrows continued scarce at Oneonta (R. Burland).

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REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

June, July and the first half of August were persistently cool (averaging 2° daily below normal) and dry (four inches less than normal rainfall for the period) with occasional windstorms. The extreme dryness of these months rapidly dried up many marshes and ponds that had been brim full in mid-May. Correspondingly marsh birds, particularly rails, did rather poorly, but the dabbling ducks, nesting some weeks earlier, fared quite well. There appeared to be considerable nest and brood mortality from high winds in late June and early July; nests of Robins, Vireos, Redstarts, and Baltimore Orioles were reported blown down. Early mowing of the many hayfields in the area produced some losses in Pheasant, Bobolink, Meadowlark and Savannah Sparrow. However, the most striking change in local population was the frank scarcity of the Bluebird (five known pairs in the four counties around Oneida Lake). Also markedly reduced, but less so than the Bluebird, were the Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Purple Martin, Hermit Thrush, and Northern Waterthrush. Some observers noted further reductions in Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. On the positive side the increases in Common Gallinule, Traill's Flycatcher, Barn Swallow, House Wren, Catbird, Wood Thrush, and Warbling Vireo were particularly gratifying.

Further explorations of the Tug Hill Plateau for breeding birds occurred on June 11 and July 4 and 10. N. B. — The July 4 trip, though well organized and

planned to the hilt, was beset by cold weather, strong winds, and protracted jeep trouble. Other trips for breeding birds covered Camillus Valley, Rome Sand Plains, Labrador Pond, and the Brookfield area southeast of Hamilton.

Fall migration seemed, aside from shorebirds, desultory and thoroughly normal.

Rarities for the region for the period included Cattle Egret, breeding Mockingbird, and breeding White-throated Sparrow at Camillus Valley.

The following abbreviations will be used regularly in this summary: SP and SPI — Sandy Pond and Sandy Pond Inlet; SSSP — Selkirk Shores State Park near Pulaski; HIGMA — Howland's Island Game Management Area near Port Byron; TRGMA — Three Rivers Game Management Area near Baldwinsville; THP — Tug Hill Plateau.

Loons — Ducks: No summering Loons were noted on Lake Ontario this year. Pied-billed Grebe; several broods at Stevens' Pond near Phoenix, at HIGMA, and at Sandy Pond point to a successful season despite low water levels in most marshes and ponds. Green Heron; 10-12 note at King Marsh, N. Syracuse, Jul 1-24 taking advantage of the increasing concentration of food as the marsh gradually dried up. Least Bittern: an immature attempted a "dead stick" act in the middle of Route 11 on Aug 15; it was found by R. Brown, photographed, and later released in Clay Swamp. Cattle Egret: one seen Jul 2 at HIGMA (Bauer) and another, an adult, Jul 24 near Mexico (Griffin, Scheider) are the second and third records, respectively, for the region.

Breeding ducks — broods of Mallards and Black Ducks appeared as numerous as in 1959, but brood size was distinctly down, most marked in Black Ducks and Wood Ducks. Blue-winged Teal and another stellar year, even breeding within the city limits of Syracuse; this species and the Mallard appear to have benefited most from the N.Y.S. Conservation Dept. Wildlife Marsh Program and from pond management at HIGMA and TRGMA (Bauer, Ernst, Taormina). Green-winged Teal: a single brood raised at Steven's Pond near Phoenix, the third year in succession. Broods of Shoveler, Pintail, and Gadwall were again observed at HIGMA (Bauer).

Migrating ducks — Fall arrival dates for some species were quite early; Gadwall — Aug 6; Pintail — Jul 31; Green-winged Teal — Jul 24; Shoveler — Jul 31; Hooded Merganser — Jul 24. Outstanding was the complete absence of American Widgeon from groups of gathering waterfowl at Sandy Pond, HIGMA, and TRGMA. Also of note was the complete lack of summering diving ducks at both Lake Ontario and Oneida Lake this season. Fall flocking was noted Aug 9 at Stevens' Pond (89 Wood Ducks and 200+ Mallards and Blacks) and Aug 14 (Estoff, Propst) at Tully Lake (300+ Mallard and Black Ducks and 48 Wood Ducks).

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: six-12 seen regularly at HIGMA and TRGMA; none noted north of Oneida Lake, and this species has yet to invade that portion of the region east and south of Oneida Lake. Hawks had their typical summertime scarcity, particularly the now rare accipiters. Broad-winged Hawk: two noted Jul 9 at Rome Sand Plains (Paquette) and one seen Jul 4 in the Tug Hill area OAS group). The Lake Ontario Bald Eagle nesting was again unsuccessful.

Ruffed Grouse: five broods seen Jun 11 in the Osceola area of the THP, plus six other broods reported; these figures plus the return of the Ruffed Grouse to the Sandy Pond dunes point to a rising Grouse population. Turkey: two broods of 15 each reported in June at HIGMA (Bauer).

Breeding shorebirds — Upland Plover were noted in seven areas (Rome x2, Onedia x3, Cicero, Pulaski), and several broods of three and four young were seen (Ackley, Aspinwall).

Migrant shorebirds were Act 1 in the drama of fall migration. Water levels at Oneida Lake and at Lake Ontario were somewhat high with consequent loss of available habitat. An early July "mooneye" kill along Lake Ontario created conspicuous rows of dead fish these in turn engendered a marvelous stench, keeping the human beach population at an all-time low, and provided a fair supply of food for the transient sandpipers. Onondaga Lake developed good mudflats (50% sewage, 50% mud) along the west shore and had an increasingly good showing of shorebirds through August. Arrival dates included Semipalmated Plover — Jul 24, Ruddy Turnstone — Jul 24, Black-bellied Plover — Aug 8, Solitary Sandpiper — Jul 10 (late), Greater Yellowlegs — Jul 19, Lesser Yellowlegs — Jul 1; Pectoral Sandpiper — Jul 18, White-rumped Sandpiper — Jul 31, Least Sandpiper —

Jul 7, Short-billed Dowitcher — Jul 24 (very late), and Sanderling — Jul 18. The July and early August flight was characterized by very low counts of Pectoral Sandpiper (max. — 25, Aug 14), Dowitcher (max — 21, Aug 14), and Solitary Sandpiper (max — three, Jul 31), with good numbers of Semipalmated Sandpiper (300 — Jul 24; 375 — Jul 31; 465 — Aug 14), Spotted Sandpiper (max 71 — Aug 14), and Lesser Yellowlegs (max — 86, Aug 14) (Ackley, Paquette, Rusk). Stilt Sandpiper: first noted were nine on Jul 18 at Onondaga Lake; one to 15, all adults, were observed intermittently thereafter to Aug 15; first immatures arrived on Aug 13 (five seen at Verona Beach), almost a full month after the adults had appeared locally. Better shorebirds for the period included Whimbrel (Hudsonian Curlew) Jul 24 north of Sandy Pond (Griffin) and a single Baird's Sandpiper Aug 13 at Verona Beach and Aug 15 at Onondaga Lake.

Common Tern: a colony of 70 nests found Jul 17 (the Thomases) on the waste beds at Onondaga Lake was a disaster area one week later (? rainstorm?), when just six young and 40 demolished, soggy scrapes were noted; parenthetically it is pleasant to find that something can utilize those darn waste beds. Caspian Tern: first noted Jul 24, SP; max of 20 on Aug 6 and up to six at Onondaga Lake. No Forster's Terns were reported.

Barred Owl: three heard at Tully Lake through August Estoff, Propst), one near Brookfield Jul 23 (the Whites), and several near Otter Lake in mid-August (Whitman) — all new stations for this species.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were scarce through the summer; the first migrants were noted at Sandy Pond on Aug 6.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: an adult male feeding cheerily to a downstudded immature at HIGMA Jul 3 establishes this species as a breeder there. Red-headed Woodpecker: a crash species this season; of nine previous pair locations only three were active this year. A new station was located near Centerville east of Pulaski (fide Evans), and a pair was noted near Utica (Curtis). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: 14 seen near Osceola, THP, Jun 11; also 12 including juvenile birds noted on the Twenty-mile Road, THP, Jul 10; this species again bred at Tully Lake (Estoff, Propst). There was a pair at Labrador Pond Jul 16, and an immature was found the same day in a nearby N.Y.S. Reforestation Plantation, Fabius (Rusk, Thomas).

Eastern Kingbird: first migrants were 35 on Jul 24 along the Sandy Ponds dunes. Eastern Phoebe: numbers continued very low; many bridges around Oneida and Pulaski were still without resident pairs where they were found four years ago, and just two were seen in the THP on Jul 10. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: an adult heard and seen Jul 10, THP, would suggest possible nesting there. Trail's Flycatcher: the brushlots and swamps of the region were infested with this species; 20 heard in a small willow swamp near Brewerton Jun 1; 60 (all "way-be-o" form) heard Jul 10 in the THP. Olive-sided Flycatcher: three singing males located about small bogs Jun 11 near Osceola, THP; also seven observed Jul 10 along the Twenty mile Road, THP, including a fledgling, thereby confirming breeding there, heretofore only suspected.

Breeding swallows — Cliff Swallow: a colony of 26 nests located three miles east of Cicero was the first colony on the south shore of Oneida Lake in five years; the Oneida and Madison County colonies (Aspinwall, Nodecker) appeared to have prospered. Some 300 Tree Swallows were banded at Shackleton Point, Oneida Lake, and Bank Swallows were banded at Oneida (759 — Nodecker) and near Jordan (184 — Whitman).

Swallow migration — Despite greater coverage and an awareness of the possibility of such movements, no major swallow flights were detected at SPI this summer; maxima there were 2300 Tree on Aug 6, 3600 Bank on Aug 14, and 1800 Barn Swallows on Aug 14. Purple Martins, hard hit by the cold spring, had an extremely poor showing with a maximum of 400 on Aug 14.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: two adults and a juvenile Jul 9 at Rome Sand Plains (Paquette) proves this species a breeder there; it was also noted in three separate areas along the Twenty-mile Road, THP, Jul 10, and the Whites saw this species regularly in the Brookfield reforestation plantations southeast of Hamilton Jul 2 — Aug 6.

Winter Wren: 23, many in full song, noted Jul 10 in the THP; one, Aug 14, at SSSP (Evans, Rusk) must have been an extremely early transient as the species does not breed there. Carolina Wren: a single Jul 20 at Syracuse (Evans) was

unusual as summer records of this species are rather rare. No Short-billed Marsh Wren were reported throughout the summer.

Catbird: this species, like the House Wren and Traill's Flycatcher, appeared to be on a definite upswing; everybody had Catbirds, and a fair number were found dead on local highways, the victims of passing cars. Mockingbird: a pair raised four young at Onondaga Hill (Yeiser, *vide* Burt) this summer, a regional first!

The Hermit Thrush continued scarce as a local breeder; the maximum Rome Sand Plains count was 12 on Jul 9; max THP count was 15 on Jul 10. Swainson's Thrush: ten noted Jun 11 near Osceola, THP, and 30 including two fledgling young tallied Jul 10 on the Twenty-mile Road, THP, the first breeding record of the species there.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: adults with two young Jul 3 at Camillus Valley is the second breeding record for the area (Scheider); a single Aug 6 near Jewell (Mrs. Raynsford) is the second record in 15 years for the north shore of Oneida Lake. Golden-crowned Kinglet: a pair with two young Jul 4 (Ackley, Carter, Hoyt, Paquette) near Seven Mile Creek, THP, is both the first summering and first nesting record for this species for the Plateau. Cedar Waxwings: in terms of numbers, this was the tree-top counterpart of the abundant Catbird; counts of 12-90/day were numerous through July and August.

Vireos — Warblers: Yellow-throated Vireos were down in numbers this year; a count of six Jul 3 on a combined Camillus Valley — HIGMA survey was low; max of nine Jul 14 at Tully (Estoff, Propst). Solitary Vireo: high tally of eight Jul 10, Twenty-mile Road, THP; also seen Jul 2 — Aug 6 in the Brookfield area near Hamilton (the Whites) where it may breed.

For ease and convenience warblers will be discussed thusly — (1) Tug Hill warblers. (2) other resident warblers, and (3) migrant warblers.

(1) — Tug Hill Warblers — Counts of singing males in that Parulid wonderland continued to be impressive. Maximum tallies made on the Jul 10 survey along the Twenty-mile Road (mainly spruce bog and stream edges alternating with second-growth deciduous vegetation) showed the following (young birds in parentheses) — Black and White 6; Nashville 12 (3), first breeding record; Parula 3 (two separate areas, two adults carrying food); Magnolia 62 (15); Black-throated Blue 44 (5); Myrtle 12 (2); Black-throated Green 40 (8); Blackburnian 26 (3); Chestnut-sided 120 (25); Ovenbird 38; Northern Waterthrush 25; Mourning 42 (several females with food but no nests were located); Yellowthroat 100 (12); Canada 24 (1); Redstart 39 (3). In contrast to the many Magnolia and Black-throated Green Warblers there, another survey taken Jun 11 along four miles of lumber road near Osceola in primarily deciduous second-growth (35-40 years old) with minimal bog situations showed the Black-throated Blue (22 singing males) well ahead of the Black-throated Green (ten s.m.) and Magnolia (six s.m.). Even more impressive, the Redstart continued to the lead position (60 s.m.), even more than the Chestnut-sided (26 s.m.), the species which could well be the symbol of the entire Tug Hill Plateau area.

(2) Other Resident Warblers — Prothonotary Warbler: five singing males noted in the maple swamp about Short Point Bay, Oneida Lake, Jun 9. Golden-winged Warbler: three fledgling young Jul 3 at Camillus Valley finally verified this species as a breeder there; two adults with two young Aug 6 at SSSP (Evans) were probably locally reared birds but might have been early migrants. Brewster's Warbler: an adult male carrying food Jun 19 at Camillus Valley was the only local record of this hybrid this year. Nashville Warbler: 20 adults with six juveniles Jul 9 along various roads in the Rome Sand Plains (Paquette) gave some indication of the abundance of this species there. Myrtle Warbler: unreported from Rome Sand Plains where but four years ago it was noted regularly in small numbers; seen in the Brookfield area, where it may breed, Jul 2 (the Whites). Cerulean Warbler observed again at Oneida Jul 4-10 (Ackley, Paquette) but no definite breeding record to date. Pine Warbler: the regular pair at SSSP brought off three young; another pair with three young Jul 9 (Paquette) at Rome Sand Plains was a first breeding record for that area; whether any young were produced by the Oneida River pair is a moot question, as the pine grove is on an island in the middle of the river, hence currently (no pun intended) uncheckable. Hooded Warbler: two young being fed by a superbly plumaged male Jul 3 at Camillus Valley confirmed this species as a breeding bird there.

(3) Migrant Warblers — a lack of sharp temperature changes and northwest winds in the first half of August precluded any rush of migrant warblers, and most fall arrival dates were about on time. On Jul 21 the first migrant Yellow Warblers were noted; on Jul 31 the first migrant Black-throated Green, Northern Waterthrush, Canada, and Redstart, plus 135 Yellow Warblers, were observed along the Sandy Pond dunes; on Aug 6 first migrant Black and White and Blackburnian Warblers were noted at SSSP and SPL; on Aug 11 Black-throated Blue Warblers and Ovenbirds were migrating at SSSP; on Aug 14 first migrant Bay-breasted and Wilson's Warblers were observed at SSSP and SP respectively (Evans, Rusk, Scheider). Aside from the counts on the many Yellow Warblers, tallies of migrants to Aug 15 were conspicuously low.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Bobolink: a successful season apparently despite some losses to early haying; a first migrants noted Jul 24. The black Icterids had another outrageously productive year, and flocking in the thousands was underway as early as Jun 10. Cowbird parasitism appeared heavy, and examples of parasitism of Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Black and White and Black-throated Blue Warblers, and Redstart were reported.

Cardinal: a pair persistently present through July at SSSP points to but does not prove breeding there (Rusk); nests and fledging young found in late June and July at Oneida (Paquette, Thurber) and at Westernville (May) show this species as a breeder in those areas. Indigo Bunting: numbers of this bright finch were distinctly up at Camillus Valley, HIGMA, and TRGMA, with a maximum of 20 at Camillus on Jul 3. Purple Finch: 22 noted Jul 10 in the THP; many males were giving flight songs and chasing females as if starting second nestings.

Grasshopper Sparrow: numbers appear to have stabilized at TRGMA; a colony of seven or eight pairs was discovered in early June near SSSP in a dry weedy meadow where two pairs of Henslow's Sparrows and a partial-albino Redwinged Blackbird were also observed.

Slate-colored Junco: five pairs with young noted Jun 11 near Osceola, THP; also found breeding at Labrador Pond (Rusk, Thomases) Jul 16 and west of Tully (Estoff, Propst) Jun 26. Chipping and Field Sparrows: a bumper crop of young birds noted at HIGMA and TRGMA (Ernest, Taormina) and in the Rome Sand Plains (Paquette). White-throated Sparrow: found in numbers (105, Jul 10) in the THP; summering birds noted at White Lake Jul 9 (Rusk) and near Brookfield Jul 2 - Aug 6 (the Whites), and breeding was established Jul 9 (five young) at the Rome Sand Plains (Paquette); a pair noted through June at Camillus Valley, the stronghold of many "southern" species, raised two fledglings seen Jul 3 (Scheider). What with southern species advancing northward and northern species moving south, the Transition Zone will soon narrow down to the width of N.Y.S. Thruway! Swamp Sparrow: 45 counted Jul 10 in the THP where it was actually more common than the Song Sparrow (25), but far less abundant than the White-throated Sparrow (q.v.); this species along with the Pied-billed Grebe, Green Heron, and Common Gallinule has benefited from the N.Y.S. Conservation Dept. Wildlife Marsh Program, utilizing both the willow tangles and the cattail margins of such places.

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REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

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There was little hot weather during the period; the average temperature was one of the lowest on record. Rainfall was about normal until August when there was less rain. Weather conditions for nesting were good.

Loons — Ducks: There were no Cattle Egrets, but two Common Egrets were seen at Wilson Hill Game Management Area, on Lake St. Lawrence near Waddington, in late July and early August. Canada Geese nested there as well as at Perch River Game Management Area near Watertown. By the middle of August about 50 birds could be seen at each locality. These geese became fairly tame. Good numbers of Wood Ducks were reported at PRGMA in August. Shovelers and Redheads nested at WHGMA. It was a very successful nesting season for ducks in this region.