

REGION 5—ONEDIA LAKE BASIN

DAVID B. PEAKALL AND MARGARET S. RUSK

June and most of July, like May, were exceptionally dry Months. The total precipitation from early May to July 20 was 2.4 inches or about a third of normal. From the third week of July to the end of the period a considerable amount of rain fell. June was warm, July and early August rather cooler than average. The dry conditions adversely affected the breeding ducks on the smaller ponds.

The occurrence of the International Ornithological Congress excursions for two separate weeks in June had some interesting effects on local birding. A more detailed account of these excursions is given by M. Rusk elsewhere in this issue. One result was the exploration of part of Herkimer County, an area long neglected by local birders. A check-list of the birds of the Big Moose area prepared by Mrs. A. Bowes is included in this issue. Normal local birding was a bit slighted, which may explain the absence of any records of late migrant shorebirds.

The early southbound shorebird flight was good, especially in variety. The Ruff appeared for the third successive year and Hudsonian Godwits were also recorded.

The following abbreviations are used: GLSP — Green Lake State Park; HIGMA — Howland's Island Game Management Area; IOC — International Ornithological Congress Oneida Lake field trips; Onon L — Onondaga Lake; RSP — Rome Sand Plains; SP — Sandy Pond; SSSP — Selkirk Shores State Park; THP — Tug Hill Plateau; TRGMA — Three Rivers Game Management Area, L—Lake; Herk. Co. — Herkimer County; Syr — Syracuse; Yng. — young; imm's. — Immatures.

Loons — Ducks: Common Loon: unreported outside Herk. Co.; pair, Jun 13, Little Moose, and pairs at East L and Big Moose L, Jun 13 and 27 (IOC); no definite evidence of breeding. Common Egret: up to 20 reported HIGMA in early summer (R. Nevinger — RN); scarce in late summer. Black-crowned Night Heron: one HIGMA Jun 12 (IOC) and SP Jun 25 (IOC), only records. Least Bittern: same as 1959, low water levels appeared to contribute to the visibility of this species; thus, more were seen than usual.

Canada Goose: 50 pairs nested at HIGMA (RN); bred for the 2nd year at Steven's Pd. nr Phoenix, six young reared. Dabbling ducks breeding populations at HIGMA were very similar to last year's. Brood counts supplied by R. Nevinger are as follows: Mallard 70, Black one or two, Gadwall three, Pintail 15, Green-winged Teal four, Blue-winged Teal ten, Shoveler two, and Wood Duck 20. Green-winged Teal seen several times at Stevens' Pd but no evidence of breeding. Counts of Mallard, Black, and Wood Duck flights into Tully were well below average, especially for the first two species (J. Propst — JP). Numbers at Gully Rd. and Stevens' Pd were also low, suggesting that the low water levels had adversely affected breeding on the smaller ponds. No records were received of migrant dabbling ducks or any diving ducks.

Hawks — Owls: Turkey Vulture: noted during the summer at HIGMA and Centerville. Very few records of accipitrine hawks; the only nesting record was of a Goshawk — nest found with three young nr Greenboro in w. part of THP (D. Bulger — DB, M. Weiskotten — MW). Nest of this species was previously found in THP in 1957. Broad-winged Hawk: twice from THP and three times in Herk. Co. Bald Eagle: two adults, several times in early Aug at SP (DB). Marsh Hawk: for the first time, no summer records, despite good coverage of several recent breeding areas.

Bobwhite: no breeding record at HIGMA (RN), one seen there Jun 12 (IOC); one at Phoenix (Pendergast Rd) Jul 10 (E. Evens — EE). Turkey: one brood HIGMA (RN).

Upland Sandpiper: good number of reports, including — six adults and two Yng. Rt. 31 nr Verona Jun 15 (IOC); three adults and two yng. Rt. 365 nr Sherrill Jun 22 (F. Scheider — FS); pair between Port Ontario and Pulaski Jun 25 (IOC) and

three there Jul 25 (EE); one n. of Taberg Jun 1, one s. of Steuben and three s. of Pt. Rock Jul 4 (H. Aspinwall-HA); seen several times nr Illion (R. Wood) — RW); Rt. 5 nr Chittenango (L. Chamberlaine, fide B. Burt — BB); between Oriskany and Clinton (A. Carter); Bridgeport Jun 10 (IOC).

Arrival dates of migrants and maximum counts (to Aug 15) of shorebirds are as follows — Semipalmated Plover: arr Jul 20 Onon L; 25-40 from end of Jul. Killdeer: max 80 Onon L Jul 19. Ruddy Turnstone: arr Jul 24 SP. Black-bellied Plover: arr Aug 6 Onon L. Whimbrel: two Oswego Jul 18 (T. Georgia) only record. Spotted Sandpiper: max 40 Onon L, late Jul. Solitary: arr Jul 23 nr Weedsport. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Jul 18 HIGMA. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Jul 4; rather scarce, with max 20, Onon L Aug 8 and 40 Oneida L Aug 2. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Jul 20 Onon L, scarce, Max eight, Aug 7. White-rumped: two Aug 10 and one Aug 13 Onon L (D. Peakall — DP, JP) only records. Baird's: one Aug 13 and four Aug 15 Onon L (DP, JP), only records. Least Sandpiper: arr Jul 4 (early) Onon L, max 106 Jul 27; numbers fell sharply in early Aug. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr Jul 27 Onon L; seven Onon L, Jul 28, thereafter one-two to end of period. Semipalmated: arr Jul 19; numbers at Onon L low (max 50) to Aug 7 when 250 were present; other good counts 150 SP, Jul 26 and 300 Oneida L, Aug 2. Western: two Onon L Aug 11 (W. Listman), rather early. Hudsonian Godwit: three Aug 6, Onon L (DP, JP), fourth regional record in ten years. Ruff: one Aug 6 (DP, JP), considered to be a male in a late stage of moult; this is the 3d. record from the same area, in successive years, an amazing series of occurrences, considering the small number of upstate records, even if all refer to the same bird. Sanderling: arr Onon L Jul 19; present in fair numbers — 45, SP by Jul 22; max 100 SP Jul 24.

Mrs. M. Woolley demonstrated what can be done with shorebirds in a limited time within the city of Syracuse by finding Spotted and "peep" sandpipers and Lesser Yellowlegs behind McArthur ball park.

Bonaparte's Gull: arr Verona Beach Aug 2 (D. Ackley-DA). Common Tern: apparently bred successfully at Onon L, as 25-30 free-flying yng. were seen there in late Jul. Caspian Tern: 20 (good count) Aug 9, Oneida L. (DA). Barn Owl: one pair, Sandy Creek which had five yng., good sized by Aug 1 (fide BB). Barred Owl: one Jul 30 Plainville (M. Bitz — MB) a new locality; in view of the number of new areas for this species, it appears to be increasing or being increasingly observed.

Goatsuckers — Shrikes: Whip-poor-will: three heard simultaneously at Cicero Swamp, Jun 25; again present at RSP — one wonders whether the deciduous — white Pine swamp and the dry pitch and white pine — white oak sand plains have some ecological factor in common; frequently found n. of Oneida L; one s. of Fayetteville (fide BB). Chimney Swift: 30 or more in THP e. of Redfield and in n. Herk. Co., Jun and Jul; apparently they utilize hollow dead standing trees in this chimneyless area. Hummingbird: reported by most observers; 8 (highest day's count), THP, Jun 22.

Flicker: 35 (high count for a limited area on such an early date) Aug 11, HIGMA. Pileated Woodpecker: quite widely reported — S. Onondaga; Fish Gulf e. of Otisco L; Bucktail Falls at s. end of Otisco L (yng. being fed Jul 15); n.w. side of Otisco L. (two seen twice); Tully; HIGMA, nr Pulaski; GLSP, Kenwood and Sherrill; also n. Herk Co. Red-headed: D. Ackley has listed all reports from an area roughly bounded by Canastota, Vernon, Munnsville and Oneida — four separate places where an adult or bird of undesignated age was sighted, an additional pair, a single immature bird, a group of four probably all imm's., and a group of two adults and two imm's., totaling nine locations, which she summarizes with this comment — "It appears that we have a small stable population . . . on the hills on both e. and w. sides of Munnsville Valley, plus scattered . . . between Oneida L and Rt. 5, and e. toward Rome and Vernon;" no other section of the Region is known to have this high concentration; L. Ontario reports are a pair each at Hickory Grove and Ramona Beach (I. Stone), both nr s.e. corner of the Lake, and one farther w. at Lakeview (M. Mathis), but none at former locations at SP or SSSP; none in s. or w. sectors; one Seneca R. n. of Syr. Jul 18 (MW); Big Moose (C&A Bowes — C, AB). Sapsucker: pair carrying food into nest hole, Jun 9 Fish Gulf (D. Dawley et al); pair feeding three fledged yng. July 13, GLSP (W. R. Spofford — WRS), et al) where a female and food-begging yng. were found in 1961; all summer, two locations, Tully; one still at Camillus Jun 26; pair Jul 30, Plainville (MB) — all these places are low and at the latitude of Syr or s. of it, one wonders whether it is the yellow birch with which Sapsuckers are often associated or some other factor which causes their presence in

these areas. Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker; pair with three yng. seen in Jul. nr Big Moose (Bowes).

Phoebe: six, good count, SSSP Jun 25 (IOC), common at HIGMA where two nests were found Jun 12 (IOC). Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: two Jun 13, Little Moose (IOC); one THP Jun 22 (FS et al); probably breeds both places. Least Flycatcher: quite common (the most common Empidonax) in the taller deciduous woods of THP, counts of 30, Jun 22 and 15 Jul 21 nr Redfield. Olive-sided: six in n. Herk. Co. Jun 27 (IOC), including a pair carrying nesting material, which establishes breeding there.

Horned Lark: imm's in Jul in sandy fields around Steven's Pd and on Onon L flats. Bank Swallow: active colonies in sand pits nr Oneida R (the largest 200 holes), a sand pit in RSP (30 holes) and in banks of Fish Creek n. of Oneida L (150 holes). Cliff Swallow: small colony about eight nests nr Pulaski Jun 25; ten or so nests at Churchillville nr Oneida; occasionally at Stevens' Pd, no colony; the Cicero Center one was inactive; birds nr Shedd's on Jul 14, indicate that they are probably fairly common in higher areas s. of Syr; "all over hill - barns n. of Rome" (HA). In THP and Herk. Co., they occur in numbers comparable to Barn Swallows.

Gray Jay: family of two adults and three imm's., Big Moose Jun and Jul (C, AB). Blue Jay: 100 adults and imm's feeding at a dump in n. Herk. Co. Jul 21 (DP) indicates their commonness in the deciduous Adirondacks. Brown-capped Chickadee: three, Jul 21 in n. Herk. Co. (DP). Tufted Titmouse: continues to spread, but fewer new locations noted this period, probably because they are more easily spotted at feeders in winter; one, Camillus Valley Jun 12 and 26 (IOC) — a new site but to be expected in view of their other locations in the Seneca R. basin; one, Port Byron Aug 11 (M. Estoff — ME, JP) nr HIGMA where recorded this spring; colony still at Baldwinsville (Bisdee). Red-breasted Nuthatch: breeding status similar to last year, but absent from 1961 location e. side of Skaneateles L. (C&E Farnham — EF). Brown Creeper: again at White L. nr Syr, two, Jul 22; one Plainville Jul 30 (MB); they probably breed in any deep moist deciduous woods around Syr.

House Wren: successful season in local areas. Carolina Wren: none reported, in contrast with last year. Short-billed Wren: typically, present at a couple of stations, not all the same ones as the previous year; one Toad Harbor on n. shore of Oneida L Jul 1; two SP Jun 11 (IOC) not found subsequently; none in Dead Creek marshes nr Baldwinsville this year. Mockingbird: one was at Palermo ne. of Fulton, singing from regularly-used perches during Jun; Jul 27, a fledged young was seen there (F. McNett). Bluebird: eight pairs noted around Sherrill (fide DA) of which three are known to have nested, but one brood was destroyed; 2nd best area is the Rome environs with two or three pairs at one location utilizing a martin house as well as a bluebird box, six nestings at Taberg, and another pair at Lee Center Jul 4 (fide HA); a pair raised yng. at Altmar (DB) but searches of likely places and known former breeding stations s. and w. of there (New Haven, Fulton, Pennellville) revealed none; at Ilion (RW); brood of five raised in Syr in May — the female disappeared, then the male deserted fledglings (cared for by N. McGowan); another brood Syr. (fide BB); brood raised at Lafayette (fide BB) where they were formerly regular — one and two seen several times in two places nr Lafayette, late Jul and first half Aug (ME, JP) may be of this nesting; yng. raised, Jamesville (fide BB); two pair at Eaton (G. Church); at least one pair at Bernhard's Bay which raised yng. (fide BB); the Bluebird situation is little better than last year.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: family of apparently two adults and three imm's., Camillus Jul 17 (DP); one, and possibly two, seen once, Oneida (M. Felle) — perhaps migrants from an unknown location n. of there (Mrs. A. Lewis reports one e. of Redfield this May when snow was still on the ground!). Golden-crowned Kinglet: four, including an imm., THP Jun 22 (FS) indicates breeding, first established for that area in 1960; three (two imm's ?) Brookfield Jul 7 (R&S White) where the species has been noted previously but breeding not definitely confirmed. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two singing, Little Moose Jun 13 & 27 (IOC), suggests breeding. Loggerhead Shrike: one (late) Jun, Churchillville (H. Nodecker); one nr HIGMA Aug 11 (ME, JP).

Vireos — Warblers: Warbling Vireo: several observers remarked on their abundance, no high counts per day, but one could be heard singing over almost any tree-shaded village street. Black-and-white Warbler: nine (high), Centerville (where they occur regularly) Jul 16 (EE). Prothonotary: heard and seen this spring in three stations a mile or more apart in Muskrat and Short Point Bay area on Oneida L.; none outside this colony. Brewster's Warbler: nr Baldwinsville Jul 16 (MB) where it

bred last year in the small colony of Golden-winged. Nashville: one, Tully Aug 5 (ME, JP), very possibly a breeding location but the bird could have been migrating. Parula: three at Little Moose, Jun 13 (IOC) and again in low numbers (two noted) THP Jun 22. Magnolia: three singing males at the regular Centerville location. Black-throated Blue: one, Jun 3 Fish Gulf (ME, JP), a new location but one where, because of the steep gorge with low deciduous growth, the species was to be expected; feeding fledged yng. THP Jun 22. Myrtle: only one, RSP, Jun 3. Black-throated Green: one Jun 9 Bucktail Falls, where it doubtless breeds. Cerulean: One, May 28 and Jul 1 singing in tall oaks at Toad Harbor (M. Rusk — MR), a first for the n. shore of Oneida L, but habitat here resembles other locations of the species more than it does the hilly country just a few miles farther north; yng. in nest high in a sycamore in Camillus Valley being fed by parent Jun 12; H. Nodecker trapped and banded a pair late in May, s. of Sherrill — the female had a brood patch; three or more summered nr Cross L (MB); one summered again at Tully (JP); this year two instead of one nested e. side of Skaneateles L (EF); one seen singing s. of Marcellus Aug 5 (MR) may have bred nearby.

Blackburnian: singles Jul 16 Centerville (EE) and Jul 17, Labrador Pd (JP), both areas where they might be expected. Chestnut-sided: two, on bushy slopes along Fish Gulf, Jun 9 and one above Bucktail Falls Jul 15. Bay-breasted: notable is two carrying food Jun 27 Little Moose (DP). Blackpoll: late migrants, six Oakwood (Syr.) Jun 1 and two SP Jun 11. Pine: five feeding yng. at SSSP colony Jun 25 (IOC). Louisiana Waterthrush: new locations, a fledged yng. being fed Jul 15 Bucktail Falls (MR, WRS) and one at Cedarvale Jun 5 (MR); old locations — a pair at Fish Gulf Jun 3 and two stations (one bird at each) on streams feeding Tully Lakes (all ME, JP) — five occupied locations is a good count, but at two other known stations s. and w. of Syr no bird was found; one, late May in a glen nr Utica (E. Curtis) seems more unusual, but less is known about that area. Mourning: one at each of two sites Plainville (MB); four singing males along Fish Gulf, Jun 9 (MR); regularly at Camillus and Centerville locations. Yellow-breasted Chat: regular site s. of Camillus occupied; one, Jun 9 Fish Gulf (H. Ives). Hooded Warbler: singing males at the regular Camillus and Martisco locations and one at a new site nr Mud L. w. of Baldwinsville Jul 4 (MR); two singing Jun 6 at SSSP where A. Fudge photographed an active nest in June.

Blackbirds — Sparrows: Bobolink: observers in most parts of the Region considered them common; reported from HIGMA as well as more northern areas; highs include ten, Stevens' Pd, Jun 6 and a moulting flock of 20 nr GLSP, Jul 13; fewer on the hill of Skaneateles (EF). Cardinal: another new high, the southern location is Labrador Pd, Jul 17 (JP); at the bottom of Bucktail Falls; "Now quite common at Rome" (HA); nested at Cattfish Creek nr L. Ontario n. of New Haven; a family at SSSP; a pair at SP Jun 25 (IOC), and one each at Victory and Fair Haven July 4; regular now along the Ontario L plain. Rose-breasted Grosbeak: quite successful — two nests at Fish Gulf Jun 9; one HIGMA Jun 12 (IOC); family groups at Camillus Jun and Jul, at GLSP, and s. of Marcellus, Jul. Purple Finch: One Baldwinsville Jul 13 (MB); in dooryards with spruce plantings Syr.; two Jun 28 and six Jul 29, Tully; five feeding yng. Jun 25 SSSP (IOC); nested at Rome (HA), not unusual away from higher coniferous areas; small numbers in Cicero Bog spruces in Jul, as is to be expected. Crossbills: 20 Red Jul 21 and five White-winged Jun 27 Big Moose (DP).

Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows: as last summer, found in most of the likely habitats where one listened for them, — Grasshopper at two sites nr Sherrill, at Stevens' Pd and at TRGMA, and Henslow's at Cicero (high, seven, Jul 30), Stevens' Pd, Fish Gulf, Lafayette, and Sterling — widely scattered places in the region. Junco: one, SSSP Jun 25 (IOC) is indication of breeding there; one all summer along a wooded slope nr Tully (ME, JP) where they may well breed; two regularly at Bucktail Falls — a very likely breeding place with its steep wooded slopes and high elevation. White-throated Sparrow: five Centerville Jul 16 (EE) indicates breeding; especially as one was also heard singing there May 26; heard for third successive year in White L woods (MR); several in a white pine-white cedar-yew-deciduous swamp nr Cazenovia (MR-WRS) and one heard in a similar location nr Sherrill Jun 23 (FS, et al) — none of these places is high, suggesting that moisture and vegetation determine their presence at our latitudes, regardless of altitude, especially in view of their presence in numbers in Cicero Bog and RSP. Lincoln's Sparrow: four n. Herk. Co. Jun 27 (DP) is indicative of breeding.

SUNY Upstate Medical Center, 766 Irving Ave., Syracuse 10