

Summary

Purple Martin mortality in May 1966 approached 75-80% in western New York. Sustained cold wet weather, with temperatures below 50° for several days, appeared to trigger the losses. Female mortality was reported as less than male, although no precise figures are available. Few western New York houses were fully occupied in 1966.

Department of Biology, State University College, Fredonia, New York 14063

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SUMMARY OF THE 1967 F. & W. S. BREEDING BIRD SURVEY

ROBERT P. YUNICK

Through the cooperation of 58 observers and numerous support personnel who helped with recording birds, driving routes and recruiting people to participate, 74 breeding bird surveys were completed in New York State during the 1967 breeding season. This survey is sponsored by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of Interior. It was begun experimentally in 1965 in Maryland and Delaware and first run in New York State in 1966. The 1967 counts amassed data on 64,188 birds of 156 species and one hybrid.

The purpose of the survey is to measure changes in abundance of breeding birds as brought about by changes in environment, land use and a multitude of other factors. To be statistically valid, the survey routes are selected on a random basis at the present density of eight per degree block. Thus there are 112 such counts in New York State. The coverage afforded by the 74 counts was adequate in all areas except the Adirondack Mountains and fringes. Twenty-three of the 38 counts which were not run were in this area.

The total value of this survey on a grand scale remains to be determined with time. However, even in its infancy, benefits appear to be accruing. The survey affords a quantitative handle for students of local bird populations. It is enlightening to know with some degree of reliable comparison the conspicuousness of species which for the most part has been previously determined quite casually. This impact is already noticeable in the use of survey data by regional editors in the October issue of *The Kingbird*. New birding areas that otherwise might not be visited are being assayed and hopefully are becoming the subjects of subsequent, more thorough investigation. In addition, there is a personal satisfaction

in knowing that one's efforts are contributing to a valuable, needed study of birdlife. Many people are finding that pleasure and scientific data collection can be one and the same.

Highs and Lows

Table I lists counts and observers. Included are the species counts, total counts, commonest species, and most widely distributed species.

The highest species count was 74 on the Randolph route, the lowest was 39 on the Mendon route. On the average, about 55 species were recorded per count. The highest total count was 1463 on the Oriskany Falls route and the lowest was 279 on the Sabattis route. The average per route was about 868 birds. I would like to emphasize that this information is provided to be informative only, and not to imply any value to a high count or lack of value to a low count. These counts are intended to be objective and accurate, and not in the competitive spirit of an Audubon Christmas Count, or "Century Run" or "Big Day" that many clubs schedule in May. A high count is no more valuable than a low count, and no attempt should be made to build a species list. Accuracy is of utmost importance.

Most Common

The Red-winged Blackbird was recorded as the most common species on 41 counts. The Starling was next on 21 counts, Common Grackle on four and Red-eyed Vireo on two. Occurring as most common on one count each were: Common Tern, Robin, House Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Veery and Barn Swallow. Alternately, if one looks at commonness or conspicuousness by totaling the numbers of each species recorded on all the counts, there are 27 species with totals of over 500. These are listed in Table II in descending order with the percentage of the total each represents, as well as the cumulative percentage of the total. Again the list is headed by the red-wing and Starling. It is revealing to see that five species accounted for one-half of the total recorded, and also revealing to see which five they were.

Least Common

There were 22 species and one hybrid for which there was recorded only one individual on one count. They were: Common Loon, Laughing Gull, Least Tern, Black Tern, Black Skimmer, Cooper's Hawk, American Widgeon, Black-crowned Night Heron, Clapper Rail, Common Gallinule, Solitary Sandpiper, Turkey, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Fish Crow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Brewster's Warbler, Parula Warbler, Carolina Wren, Boreal Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

TABLE I
FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE BREEDING BIRD COUNTS
NEW YORK STATE — 1967

	Count	Cooperator	Species Total	Total Count	Commonest Species*	Most Distributed Species**
N-1	Westhampton	G. S. Raynor	44	869	C. Grackle	Bobwhite
N-2	Manorville	G. S. Raynor	46	754	C. Tern	Blue Jay
N-3	Huntington	W. A. McAneny	40	1066	C. Grackle	C. Grackle
N-4	Jones' Beach	F. Enders	40	1336	Starling	Starling
						House Sparrow
N-5	Hauppauge	F. Enders	42	651	C. Grackle	C. Grackle
N-6	Bedford	S. R. Lincoln	54	691	Robin	Robin
N-7	Somer	E. Ditterline	49	1025	Starling	Starling
						Robin
N-8	Rhinebeck	O. T. Waterman	59	1053	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-9	HIGHLAND	E. Rifenburg	47	766	C. Grackle	Robin
N-10	Warwick	Mrs. I. W. Dean	40	535	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-11	Middletown	A. Merritt	50	1020	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-12	Rifton	H. W. Weber	52	883	House Sparrow	Robin
N-13	Westbrookville	E. D. Treacy	57	1301	Starling	Starling
N-15	Mt. Hope	E. D. Treacy	57	988	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-16	Austerlitz	G. Erlenbach	61	483	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-17	Petersburg	P. P. Wickham	67	788	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-18	Catskill	J. H. Bush	46	655	Starling	Robin
N-19	Ghent	P. P. Wickham	56	1037	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-20	Ballston Lake	B. R. Seguin	61	1022	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
						Robin
N-21	Durham	O. A. Knorr	58	679	Starling	Song Sparrow
N-24	Meridale	Mrs. L. Clark	52	640	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-25	Cobleskill	W. B. Sabin	51	1209	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-26	Duanesburg	W. B. Sabin	51	931	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-27	South Berne	C. E. Parker	68	835	Starling	Robin
N-30	Whitney Point	D. R. Bystrak	52	787	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-31	Coventryville	I. E. Bemont	65	790	Starling	Starling
N-32	McDonough	C. R. Howard	61	409	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-33	Corbettsville	P. G. Kalka	56	740	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-35	Oriskany Falls	E. T. Farnham	59	1463	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-36	Oxford	H. T. Marsi	67	1160	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-38	Lisle	R. J. Pantle	56	953	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-39	E. Newark	R. Williams	59	812	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-41	Dryden	S. H. Spofford	57	948	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-43	Trumansburg	D. W. McIlroy	50	829	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-44	Vestal Center	N. R. Washburn	51	843	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-45	Phillips Creek	L. L. Burton	61	1102	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-46	Swain	C. Klingensmith	63	612	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-47	Orleans	P. R. Trail	62	1285	Starling	Song Sparrow
N-49	Branchport	M. J. Lerch	55	839	R.-W. Blackbird	Starling
						Song Sparrow
N-51	Mendon	W. Hartranft	39	681	R.-W. Blackbird	C. Crow
						Robin
						Starling
						House Sparrow
						R.-W. Blackbird
						Am. Goldfinch
						Song Sparrow
N-52	Mt. Morris	A. E. Ulrich	60	1057	Starling	Song Sparrow

* Species with highest total count.

** Species recorded at greatest number of stops.

TABLE I—Continued

Count	Cooperator	Species Total	Total Count	Commonest Species*	Most Distributed Species**
N-53 Hamburg	E. L. Seeber	49	1069	Starling	Robin
N-54 West Seneca	M. A. Wendling	62	1213	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-55 Gainesville	R. F. Andrie	59	1222	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-56 Cattaraugus	D. M. Bigelow	54	739	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-57 East Java	P. M. Benham	60	542	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-58 Castile	H. Klabunde	52	1348	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-59 Randolph	S. W. Eaton	74	665	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-60 Centerville	R. Brownstein	63	877	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-61 Sheridan	F. M. Rew	60	1264	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-62 Cherry Hill	R. A. Sundell	62	1407	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-63 Nashville	E. L. Seeber	68	959	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-64 St. Johnsburg	Mrs. W. McKale	43	1318	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-65 E. Youngstown	H. Klabunde	47	1319	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-66 Byron	G. Seamans	54	703	Starling	Song Sparrow
N-69 N. Victory	J. W. Propst	58	896	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-70 Cicero Center	J. W. Propst	59	1004	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-71 Watertown	A. W. Allen	42	621	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-72 Pulaski	R. C. Walker	46	503	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-75 Kasoag	M. S. Rusk	68	702	Starling	R.-W. Blackbird
N-76 Highmarket	K. G. Hanson	49	881	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
N-77 Number Four	E. T. Farnham	63	922	R.-W. Blackbird	Am. Goldfinch
N-78 N. Wilmurt	R. Williams	63	536	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-85 Speculator	R. Williams	58	357	Wh.-thr. Sparrow	Robin
N-88 North River	W. B. Sabin	58	790	Red-eyed Vireo	Wh.-thr. Sparrow
N-89 Salem	P. F. Connor	65	848	R.-W. Blackbird	Red-eyed Vireo
N-91 North Easton	W. G. Gorman	67	1210	R.-W. Blackbird	R.-W. Blackbird
N-93 Warrensburg	W. B. Sabin	55	608	Veery	C. Grackle
N-94 Fowler	J. B. Belknap	45	344	Starling	Veery
N-101 Sabattis	M. S. Rusk	49	279	Red-eyed Vireo	Wood Thrush
N-107 Underwood	D. H. Young	52	331	Barn Swallow	Robin
N-110 Willsboro	G. T. Chase	47	437	R.-W. Blackbird	Barn Swallow
N-111 Naples	S. W. Eaton	57	1043	R.-W. Blackbird	Robin
N-112 S. Vandalia	S. W. Eaton	59	704	R.-W. Blackbird	Song Sparrow
					Robin

* Species with highest total count.

** Species recorded at greatest number of stops.

Most Widely Distributed

Table I lists 16 species that were recorded at the greatest number of stops per count. This list is also headed by the red-wing, but contains three species not noted on the list of commonest species. The 16 species, with the number of counts in parentheses on which each was seen most frequently, are: Red-winged Blackbird (33), Robin (21), Song Sparrow (15), Starling (6), Common Grackle (3), House Sparrow (2), Red-eyed

TABLE II
COMMONEST SPECIES BY TOTAL COUNT

Species	Total Count	Percent of Total	Cumulative Total
1. Red-winged Blackbird.....	10,351	16.1	16.1
2. Starling.....	8753	13.6	29.7
3. Robin.....	4414	6.88	36.6
4. Common Grackle.....	4408	6.87	43.5
5. House Sparrow.....	3712	5.87	49.2
6. Song Sparrow.....	2910	4.55	53.8
7. Common Crow.....	1918	2.99	56.7
8. American Goldfinch.....	1805	2.81	59.5
9. Barn Swallow.....	1346	2.09	61.6
10. Eastern Meadowlark.....	1291	2.01	63.6
11. Chipping Sparrow.....	1082	1.69	65.3
12. Bobolink.....	915	1.42	66.7
13. Yellowthroat.....	910	1.42	68.1
14. Brown-headed Cowbird.....	872	1.36	69.5
15. Catbird.....	860	1.34	70.8
16. Yellow Warbler.....	857	1.33	72.1
17. Baltimore Oriole.....	846	1.32	73.5
18. Rock Dove.....	787	1.23	74.7
19. Wood Thrush.....	776	1.21	75.9
20. Mourning Dove.....	771	1.20	77.1
21. Rufous-sided Towhee.....	764	1.19	78.3
22. Blue Jay.....	762	1.19	79.5
23. House Wren.....	701	1.09	80.6
24. Savannah Sparrow.....	697	1.09	81.7
25. Field Sparrow.....	693	1.08	82.7
26. Red-eyed Vireo.....	670	1.04	83.8
27. Yellow-shafted Flicker.....	580	0.90	84.7

Vireo (2), American Goldfinch (2), and one each for White-throated Sparrow, Veery, Barn Swallow, Bobwhite, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Field Sparrow and Wood Thrush.

In considering the matter of distribution from the point of view of what species were recorded on the greatest number of routes, one gets a similar list. The following are the species seen on the indicated number of counts. All but the kingbird are on the list of commonest species.

74 Counts: Common Crow	72 Counts: Yellow-shafted Flicker
Red-winged Blackbird	Starling
Common Grackle	Yellowthroat
Song Sparrow	71 Counts: Brown-headed Cowbird
73 Counts: Blue Jay	Baltimore Oriole
Chipping Sparrow	American Goldfinch
Barn Swallow	Wood Thrush
Catbird	70 Counts. Eastern Kingbird
Robin	Field Sparrow

The names of all species included here refer to those given in the 1957 A.O.U. Check-list.

Acknowledgements

It is impossible to acknowledge by name all of the individuals who contributed to the 1967 survey. To those who are mentioned here in connection with their respective counts go my thanks for their cooperation and valuable assistance. To the numerous unnamed people who assisted in other ways goes no less a thank-you for their contribution to the success of the survey. I look forward to their assistance in 1968.

There are three people, however, whose efforts deserve special mention. They are Walter Klabunde of the Buffalo Ornithological Society who coordinated 17 routes in the Buffalo area, thereby relieving me of the task of contacting each person individually, Peter Wickham of the Schenectady Bird Club who coordinated 12 routes near Schenectady, and Walton Sabin, also of SBC, who for the second year in succession ran four counts, the greatest number run by anyone in the state.

1527 Myron Street, Schenectady, N.Y. 12309

LITTLE GALLOO ISLAND — A TWENTY YEAR SUMMARY

JOHN B. BELKNAP

Since my initial visit to Little Galloo in May 1948 there has been a continued expansion in the Ring-billed Gull colony located there. It is now considered to be the largest breeding colony of the species in North America. The increase in gulls since the passage of the migratory bird act in 1918 has been particularly noticeable during the past two decades. For many years the Ring-billed Gull bred mainly in the prairie regions of the United States and Canada, eastward to the upper Great Lakes. An eastward expansion began some forty years ago and the colony on Little Galloo was established around 1940.

Our first definite knowledge came as the result of a visit to the island on June 7, 1945. At this time Dr. H. L. Kutz found Ring-billed Gulls well established on the southwesterly end of the island. During the past twenty years numerous visits have been made to Little Galloo by the writer and others, mainly in the months of May and June.

Little Galloo Island, about 43 acres in extent, lies near the eastern end of Lake Ontario some $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the mainland. Roughly oval, it is three-sevenths of a mile in the longer dimension. The island is composed of rock with a thin covering of soil. Grass and weeds constitute much of the vegetation. The number of trees is limited and these are mainly around the perimeter. The interior resembles a level, grassy meadow.

The recorded history of the gulls on Little Galloo began in 1945 when Dr. Kutz estimated a population of 2000 adults, with a ratio of ten Ring-bills to one Herring Gull. At the time of my visit in 1948 the Ring-bills were occupying an area of nearly ten acres and showed a considerable increase in numbers. On the other hand the Herring Gull population was