

REGION 10 — MARINE

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Most observers commented that this was a "good" summer in terms of apparent breeding success.

The most conspicuous sign of this season's prosperity were the swallows. They were noted raising two broods all over Long Island, and by early August their young filled the air at traditional gathering spots such as Jamaica Bay and Tobay Sanctuary. One need only read last year's summer and fall reports to realize the depths to which the swallow population had fallen last year.

Another prosperous species was the Osprey. Extensive field work on Gardiner's Island during 1966 and 1967 recorded three or four nestlings each year. In 1968, no less than 30 young were noted in a check of the same nest sites as in the previous two years. One is tempted to congratulate Suffolk County for this good fortune—a court order last year restrained them from using DDT.

LATE MIGRATION

Most birders put away their binoculars on May 31st, the traditional end of spring migration. The following is a log of migrants mist-netted and banded by Fred Schaeffer at Great Gull Island, a small "tern" island lying east of Orient Point:

Jun 10—Least Flycatcher (very late), Blue Jay (2), *LINCOLN'S SPARROW* (latest spring record, verified by Dr. K. C. Parkes).

Jun 14—Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

Jun 15—Great Crested Flycatcher (extremely late), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (extremely late), Traill's Flycatcher (extremely late), American Redstart (female, extremely late).

Jun 17—Indigo Bunting (sub-adult male, extremely late).

Jun 20—*ACADIAN FLYCATCHER* (lengthy details submitted including the fact that it called after release; photographed and verified by Dr. D. Cooper and Dr. K. C. Parkes; latest spring record), *SEASIDE SPARROW* (male, latest spring record).

Note that Fred banded the above 12 migrants on 5 of the 10 days he had nets set. Similar data could probably be gathered during June at almost any other coastal locality in our region. We doubt this represents a late migration, as much as the inevitable passage of late stragglers.

BIRDS BREEDING IN CENTRAL PARK

Birds continue to breed in Central Park despite the increased ecological and sociological changes in this "sooty-green" oasis. Roger Pasquier made two serious attempts on June 15 and 30 to discover possible nesting species, and the following is his list: Mourning Dove (3 each trip), Chimney Swift (4 each trip), Great Crested Flycatcher (singing bird, June 15), Eastern Wood Pewee (pair in same spot each trip), Catbird (pair with two young on the 30th), Brown Thrasher, Red-Eyed Vireo, Ovenbird (one on the 30th), Yellowthroat (2 males on the 15th), Baltimore Oriole (pair with nest), Cardinal (female on both trips).

Blue Jay, Robin, and Common Grackle were all mentioned as being "common" and other observers noted Tufted Titmouse with young. Also, House Finches probably nested behind the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Excepting Chimney Swift, if all the above species bred in the park this summer, the total would be 15, plus the introduced Rock Dove, Starling and House Sparrow. Fifteen however, represents a 25% increase over the "dozen" mentioned by Carleton (The Birds of Central and Pros-

pect Parks, 1958. *Proceedings of the Linnaean Society*, Nos. 66-70: 1-60.). Regarding several of the above species, Carleton states: Mourning Dove—"uncommon transient;" Great Crested Flycatcher—"bred 1955;" Eastern Wood Pewee—"occasionally lingering into summer... bred until 1922;" Ovenbird—"common spring transient;" Yellowthroat—"common transient;" Baltimore Oriole—"last bred in 1937." He listed six occurrences of the Tufted Titmouse; the House Finch had not yet been recorded.

Rarities reported this summer included Black Rail (breeding), Willet (breeding range expansion), American Avocet, Gull-billed Tern (breeding?), Saw-whet Owl (breeding), Wheatear, and Acadian Flycatcher.

Abbreviations used: JBWR—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; Jones—Jones Beach State Park.

Contributors frequently cited: AB—Albert Bell; BC—Barbara Connolly; AD—Aline Dove; TD—Thomas Davis; FE—Frank Enders; DF—Darrel Ford; HH—Helen Hays; PJ—P. Jones; MK—Michel Kleinbaum; LM—Lee Morgan; WN—William Norse; WP—Will Post; BT—Benjamin Trimble; JY—John Yrizzary.

LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: Aug 11 Jones (TD,PJ)—early migrant, still in summer plumage. Red-throated Loon: four Jul 20 Gardiner's Island (BT)—even one would be rare at this date. Cory's Shearwater: Aug 5 Lower NY Bay (MK). Sooty Shearwater: Aug 5 Lower NY Bay (MK). *LEACH'S PETREL*: two Jul 13 near Great Gull Island (HH *et al*)—Wilson's Petrel also seen on other trips. On Aug 4 and 6, single Leach's were caught at Great Gull Island during the night in mist nets (D. Cooper). Snowy Egret: the first post-breeding wanderer was noted at Garden City on Jul 15 (AB). Least Bittern: one pair bred at JBWR (LM).

Heron colonies, with numbers of pairs breeding—Canarsie Pol Jun 5 and Jul 9 (HH): Common Egret three, Snowy Egret 100, Black-crowned Night Heron 50, Glossy Ibis 50. JBWR Jun 17 (TD): Snowy Egret 20, Black-crowned Night Heron 30, Glossy Ibis 40. Lawrence Marsh May 30 and Jun 25 (HH): Little Blue Heron six, Common Egret one, Snowy Egret 36, Glossy Ibis six—a drastic reduction in numbers compared with 1966 and 1967. Total breeding pairs of Glossy Ibis in the Region, however, appear to be only slightly reduced. Jones Beach Jul 5 and 23 (WP, FE): at least 12 pairs of Glossy Ibis bred—first time here. Tobay Sanctuary Jun 11 (HH): Common Egret 30, Snowy Egret 20. Oak Beach (WP,FE): Green Heron three, Little Blue Heron one (three young banded), Common Egret five, Snowy Egret 12, Black-crowned Night Heron 15—"very poor year... there was a lot of disturbance, people shooting 'pigeons' in groves and target shooting in dunes." (WP). Robbins Island Jun 30 (HH): Black-crowned Night Heron 15.

Gadwall: four broods raised at Oak Beach (WP,FE); one or more pairs bred at the Southside Sportsman's Club, Oakdale (R. Giffon, *vide* K. Helms)—this species now breeds at six other localities along the south shore from JBWR to Gardiner's Island. It is apparently unrecorded from the north shore and should be looked for, especially in marshes where Black Ducks breed. Ring-necked Duck: male, through season, JBWR (JY,TD *et al*)—second summer record. King Eider: female, through season, JBWR (MK,TD *et al*)—"on Aug 6, I watched it tipping for food in shallow water, in the manner of a Black Duck" (TD).

HAWKS—OWLS: Broad-winged Hawk: Jun 23 Forest Pk (TD)—"calling bird soaring over park, being chased by Redwings." Osprey: over 30 young fledged at Gardiner's Island (Caretaker Mackay, *vide* D. Puleston)—about nine times more than fledged each of the past two years. Peregrine Falcon: Jul 21 Gardiner's Island (BT). Sparrow Hawk: Aug 11 Tobay (TD *et al*)—early migrant. Virginia Rail: six nests were found at Oak Beach (WP,FE)—nesting in a brackish marsh, a new breeding locality for the Region. *BLACK RAIL*: four territorial males were heard all summer at Oak Beach and four birds were trapped and banded (WP,FE)—31

years ago a Black Rail's nest was found at approximately the same spot, the last breeding record in the Region. Common Gallinule: pair with young Aug 17, Pond "X" Lawrence (P. Buckley); pair also bred at JBWR (JY).

American Oystercatcher: pair at Grass Island near Captree, second pair at Fox Island also near Captree, both on Jul 13 (WP,TD,DF); four pairs attempted to breed in the vicinity of Shinnecock Inlet, but only one was successful—fledging two young (L. Wilcox). Willet: nest with four eggs at Tiana Beach, later found destroyed (L. Wilcox)—new nesting locality, 50 miles east of the still growing "colony" at Jones-Gilgo Beach. Purple Sandpiper: three Aug 11 East Rockaway Inlet (R. Sischel)—this species is now reported nearly every summer. Ruff: "winter male" Aug 15 JBWR (WN). *AMERICAN AVOCET*: Jun 20 Oak Beach (FE); Jul 20–21, JBWR (N. Wagerik *et al*)—only one previous midsummer report for this species. Wilson's Phalarope: two Aug 3 Mecox (TD, P. Buckley, PJ); Aug 15, JBWR (WN).

Parasitic Jaeger: light phase adult Aug 4, Fire Island (PJ,TD); two light phase adults Aug 11, Jones (PJ,TD). *GULL-BILLED TERN*: two, early June to at least the end of July, Oak Beach (FE,WP,TD,DF)—the first record of a pair summering in our Region (see also Grass Island Tern colony report, below); Aug 4 Orient Pt (FE). Royal Tern: two Aug 5 Lower NY Bay (MK); three Aug 14 Jones (H. McCauley, HH). Black Skimmer: Jun 14 Central Pk (O. Goellet); six Jun 26, Central Park (J. Bull).

Gull, Tern, and Skimmer colonies with numbers of pairs breeding—Gulls: Captree State Pk, 17 visits Apr 26-Jul 7 (TD, *et al*): Great Black-backed Gull 17, Herring Gull 830. Mixed terns: Breezy Pt, Rockaway, Jun 30 (E. Daly, R. Claremont, *et al*): Common Tern 800, Least Tern, two—"469 Common Tern nests counted, the rest estimated." This sizeable colony had never before been censused, although its presence has been known for years. Lawrence Marsh, May 30 and Jun 25 (HH): Common Tern nine—nesting in salt marsh. Fox Island, south of Babylon, Jul 13 (TD, WP,DF): Common Tern 50, Roseate Tern three, Least Tern 10, Black Skimmer 35, Piping Plover 10, Spotted Sandpiper one. Grass Island, south of Babylon, Jul 13 (TD,WP,DF): Herring Gull one, Common Tern 300, Roseate Tern 20, Black Skimmer 30, Spotted Sandpiper one. A pair of *GULL-BILLED TERNS* was also seen flying over the colony. It is remotely possible that they were nesting here. Moriches Inlet (G. Raynor): Common Tern 500, Roseate Tern 50–75, Black Skimmer 30. Shinnecock Inlet, 2 miles west, Jul 30 (HH): Common Tern 1800, Roseate Tern 700, Black Skimmer 25. Great Gull Island, through summer, (HH, D. Cooper): Common Tern 1300, Roseate Tern 1000. Robbin's Island, Jun 30 (HH): Common Tern 500, Roseate Tern 20. Southold, "Port of Egypt," (AD): Common Tern 75, Least Tern 25+. Stony Brook Harbor, Jun 30 (TD, R. Cioffi): Common Tern 150, Roseate Tern two, Least Tern 120, Piping Plover three. Stony Brook is the only north shore tern colony with Commons and Roseates. Its presence has been known for ten years, but it was never censused. Caumsett State Pk, Lloyd Neck, Jun 20, (BC, AD): Least Tern 50.

Long-eared Owl: a pair raised three young on Gardiner's Island (A. Swoger, BT). Short-eared Owl: "on Jun 18 Enders and I saw a Short-ear in courtship display over the marsh, one mile west of Cedar Beach. It flew up to 150–200 feet and then dove down in the manner of a falcon with folded wings—very spectacular. This bird probably bred out there as we saw it several times during the summer," (WP). *SAW-WHET OWL*: the pair mentioned in the spring report raised five young at Tobay (R. Barth, F. Schaeffer *et al*).

GOATSUCKERS—STARLING: Ruby-throated Hummingbird: a pair nested in a Black Pine on Dune Rd, Hampton Beach (K. Helms *et al*). Great Crested Flycatcher: see introduction. Also see introduction for Yellow-bellied, Acadian, Traill's and Least Flycatcher as well as Eastern Wood Pewee. Red-breasted Nuthatch: an individual summered in oak woods near Glen Head (BC)—casual at this season, no

breeding records. *WHEATEAR*: adult Jun 8, Van Cortlandt Pk (O. Goelet, S. Koelle)—see Field Notes this issue. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: pair feeding young at nest, Jun 20 Caumsett State Pk (AD,BC)—the third nesting record for the Region, both previous records in 1963.

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Golden-winged Warbler: singing male present at Sagamore Hill until at least Jun 9 (AB,BC)—“apparently lacked a mate.” This species is not known to breed on Long Island. *LAWRENCE’S WARBLER*: Jul 7, Lloyd Harbor Village Pk (B. McEneny). American Redstart: see introduction.

BLACKBIRDS—SPARROWS: Orchard Oriole: singing subadult male, Jun 20 Caumsett State Pk (BC,AD). Indigo Bunting: see introduction. Dickcissel: four (one singing), Jul 8, Mitchell Field (BC)—apparently arrived this day, earliest fall record by six weeks. Seaside Sparrow: see introduction. White-throated Sparrow: “two spent the summer at East Marion, and were seen frequently by Judd Bennet at his feeder . . . I saw one on Aug 4” (G. Raynor)—casual at this season, not known to breed.

NOTE: Please send in fall reports by Dec. 7.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Natural History of Undercliff Road. Daniel Smiley and Frank E. Egler. The Mohonk Trust, Educational Release No. 1, 1968. 45 pp., illus. \$1.00 from the Trust Office, Mohonk Lake, New Paltz, N.Y. 12561.

Undercliff Road is located below the southeast escarpment of the Shawangunk Mountains west of New Paltz, N.Y., on the property of the Mohonk Trust. About two-thirds of the road is built along the talus slope below conglomerate cliffs. These cliffs, up to 200 feet high, are a favored spot for rock climbers. Along the road there are also a few shale cliffs and shale hills.

The booklet is written as a self-guiding nature trail along the 2.3 miles of road. Each of seventeen stations is described, with particular emphasis on the plant associations found in that habitat. Also discussed are the geological background and how man’s use has affected the area. Some of the animals, birds and insects attracted by the different habitats are mentioned. Facing the page describing each station are reproductions of three photographs illustrating points of interest to be noted there.

Many years ago I lived south of the Mohonk area and occasionally went to the Shawangunks birdwatching and view hunting. I would like to go again with this little booklet, which would greatly increase my appreciation not only of Undercliff Road, but also of the rest of that interesting, long ridge isolated by wide valleys from the other ranges of hills in the area.

Mr. Smiley and Mr. Egler, as well as the Mohonk Trust, are to be commended for this first educational release. To walk Undercliff Road with this booklet to encourage a more seeing eye and a better understanding of inter-relationships between rock formations, plants found growing in close association with each, animal occurrence and the effect of human disturbance, would greatly increase the visitor’s enjoyment of the area. Naturalists in other areas should be encouraged to work up similar booklets.

DWM