

The Ruff in Northern Seneca County: To my knowledge the first record of the Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) in northern Seneca County, New York occurred on Aug 17, 1963 at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. During the 1960's the species appeared there with some regularity during the summer or fall (see Ruff at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, *Kingbird* Vol. XIX, No. 4, p 205). The first spring record was on Apr 29, 1972 when a male in breeding plumage was sighted by the writer and subsequently seen by others. This was a dark bird with a chestnut brown ruff. In 1973 a bird thought to be an immature male was seen by Noel Cutright and Doug Kibbe on May 13. On May 18 the writer and others observed a rusty brown male with a black ruff.

On May 11, 1974 the writer found a very buffy individual, probably an immature bird. Up to this point no Ruffs had been seen away from Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge but between May 25 and July 8 of this year three Ruffs and two Reeves were found at the Waterloo dump which is located a few miles west of the Refuge.

Ruff No. 1 was found by the writer on May 25 feeding with several Pectoral Sandpipers (*Erolia melanatus*) in a wet mucky area of the dump used for the disposal of waste vegetable matter from the local cannery. It fed in deeper water than the Pectorals and at times completely immersed its head in the water. The bird was brown with large dark blotches on the breast. The feathers of the back and wings were broadly edged with light tan or buff. Dark bars crossed the tail. The belly was white. The dull yellow legs had a slight greenish tinge. The bill was dark. In flight a faint thin wing stripe showed and there were large white patches on either side of the dark central tail feathers. This bird was observed through May 27 by many persons including James and Judy Stewart, Morgan Jones and Robert and June Walker, who came from Watertown to see it.

Ruff No. 2 was found by the writer in the same small pool on July 6. It was a black bird with a brown ruff, light face, white belly and brownish wings barred with black. The legs were yellow-green and the bill black.

Ruff No. 3. The following day, when the writer returned to the dump, he found not only Ruff No. 2 but another present. This one had a black ruff and a light face. It was chestnut from the top of the head down the neck and back to the tail which was black. It had black barring from the middle of the back down to the tip of the tail. The brownish wings were mottled with black, white and tan. Its belly was white, legs yellow-green and bill black.

The two birds were about 100 feet apart and each had a small area in which it fed. They did not approach each other at any time. Lesser Yellowlegs (*Totanus flavipes*) and Least Sandpipers (*Erolia minutilla*) were feeding in the same area. Both birds were aggressive toward their feeding companions. Bird No. 3 was especially pugnacious, reacting forcefully to the approach any bird. Both birds were observed in flight and the white oval patches on either side of the tail were noted.

Reeves — Among the numerous persons who came to see the Ruffs were a group from Rochester on July 7 which included Warren Lloyd, Mary Ann Sunderlin, Bernard Olin and others. They found not only the two Ruffs but two Reeves as well.

This has been the "year of the Ruff" in Northern Seneca County.

All of the 1974 observations, which were reported as having been made by the writer, were made in good sunlight using 10 X 50 binoculars and a 30X scope.

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First Breeding Record of Bewick's Wren in New York State: On July 7, 1974, the junior author, conducting a breeding bird census on the Duck Pond watershed as one of the baseline ecological studies of The Mohonk Trust, Mohonk Lake, Ulster County, N.Y., discovered a pair of Bewick's Wrens (*Thryomanes bewickii*) nesting

between the rafters and roof of a rustic pagoda, at the top of a 200 foot, south facing escarpment of the Shawangunk Mountains. The senior author made primary confirmation of this identification on July 8 and it was later substantiated by Bradley J. Snyder, Fred N. Hough, Virginia Smiley, Alice Jones, Helen Manson, Davis Finch, Robert Smart, Tom Davis, et al. The nest, very loosely constructed of twigs, grasses, and hair, was 6' above ground level and 1490' above sea level. It contained (probably) 3 young in light down estimated to be 2-4 days old, but no good views of the nestlings could be obtained.

In the course of the nesting period, songs and alarm notes were noted and compared with recordings. The adult plumage and characteristic sideways jerking of the tail left no doubt in any observer's mind as to the identity of the birds. Both adults were seen at once, eliminating the possibility of a Bewick's X Carolina hybridization.

The young left the nest on July 17 and a group of 5 (3 young, 2 adults) were seen on the 22nd. They were observed regularly until August 11, at which time they seemed to disperse; it is probable that one juvenile was lost during this period.

Food gathering in the nesting period was done mostly to the east, along the slope or at its base, where the forest is more open. After leaving the nest the group was seen only in the thick undergrowth of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) or among the tumbled rocks around the mountain top. Insects and larvae were the only foods observed to be taken.

Five distinct vocalizations were noted: the male song, an adult alarm note (bzzzzt-), an adult location note (*plit-plit*), the squalling of the nestlings, and a food-begging *weep*? of the fledglings.

The following species were seen regularly in the vicinity of the nest site: Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, and Field Sparrow. Significantly, no House Wrens were seen or heard in the immediate area.

Those wishing to check how far out of breeding range these birds were are referred to Bent, *Life Histories of North American Wrens, Thrashers and their Allies*, Smithsonian Institution Bulletin 195, 1948, p 181; and Todd, *Birds of Western Pennsylvania*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940, pp 417-20. It appears the closest previously known nest-site is 180 miles to the southwest of Mohonk Lake.

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A Winter Record of Barn Swallows in Ithaca, New York: A late January thaw which sent temperatures into the 50's and a day of strong southerly winds heralded the arrival in Ithaca on January 27, 1974 of two Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) which could truly be called the first spring migrants of 1974! Both birds were observed the following day in flight along the south shore of Cayuga Lake near the mouth of Cayuga Inlet. On January 29 only one bird was seen, and neither bird was reported after that date although the weather remained unseasonably warm until the end of the month.

Tree Swallows (*Iridoprocne bicolor*) are known for their ability to winter further north than other swallows, particularly along the coast, by feeding on vegetation when flying insects are unavailable; and there are several reports of Tree Swallows lingering about marshes in central New York into January. However, Barn Swallows are virtually unknown in North America during the winter and all returning dates available from the Cayuga Lake basin were in April. John Bull (pers. comm.) indicates that the earliest previously reported arrival dates for New York State are March 19 (inland) and March 15 (coastal). He also states that the latest fall dates are November 17 (inland), December 1 (coastal specimen) and exceptionally to December 19 on Long Island. The two Ithaca birds appear to be the only mid-