

new bird to Rockland Co. List. 1 bright plumaged ad Aug 23 Piermont Pier (AA). Dark-eyed Junco: 3 Surebridge Sw. June 18 (ERB). 1 June 20 Deep Hollow, Dutchess Co. (AJ). Chipping Sparrow: numbers reported down in Palisades Park, but not changes elsewhere.

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls, New York 10928

REGION 10 — MARINE

ANTHONY J. LAURO and BARBARA J. SPENCER

Record rainfall of 22.4 inches for the three month period, June, July, August and low average monthly temperatures of 70.3° F., 75.6° F. and 74.4° F., respectively, apparently did not adversely affect breeding success for most species, although the spirits of some observers and most home gardeners were dampened.

NORTH LINE ISLAND: The peak event of the summer was the discovery of the first **LONG-BILLED CURLEW** reported in our area since 1938. The bird was found on North Line Island, about one mile south of Wantagh, Long Island. News of the bird's presence quickly spread. The bird was seen and photographed by many birders during its three weeks' stay in the area. The curlew was last reported on July 30. As North Line Island became the mecca of local birders its reputation for number of rarities and abundance of individuals grew. High counts of two, possibly three, Ruffs, three Marbled Godwits, 15 Hudsonian Godwits, 2 Whimbrels, 40 Willets, 38 American Oystercatchers, 1500 Red Knots, 300 Ruddy Turnstones and 2000 Short-billed Dowitchers with a total of 28 species of shorebirds were reported by various observers during July.

The birding productivity of North Line Island, as well as of adjacent Middle Line Island and South Line Island was, apparently, created by the construction of a sewer outfall line which resulted in the formation of sandy areas and tidal pools on these normally grassy islands. The creation of the attractive habitat was a beneficial aspect of a project of the Nassau County Department of Public Works, an agency not accustomed to receiving kudos from birders and environmentalists.

Other rarities reported during the period included Sooty Tern, Curlew Sandpiper, Purple Gallinule and a probable Bridled Tern.

NEW STATE BREEDING RECORDS: Two first state breeding records were established this summer. Among breeding terns and skimmers on a South Oyster Bay island were two nesting pairs of **GULL-BILLED TERNS** (PAB, FB, MG, THD *et al.*). While one nest containing two eggs appeared to suffer from human interference, two young were fully fledged (BS, BC). Breeding was suspected but not proven at JBWR with at least one adult Gull-bill remaining until July 13. A pair of **CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOWS** fledged two young at Oak Beach (THD *et al.*) for another first state breeding record. See *The Kingbird*, vol. XXV, no. 3, pp. 132-137, July, 1975, for details.

JUNE COUNTS: A census was made of three Region 10 Christmas count areas in June; Northern Nassau (2nd year), Central Suffolk (1st year) and Captree (3rd year). In addition, a street by street count of the "square mile" village of Sea Cliff, Northern Nassau Co. was made to survey closely a largely residential area. Count totals for the three areas were similar, with Central Suffolk reporting 133 species (15,006 individuals), Northern Nassau 130 species (11,679 individuals) and Captree 129 species. The Central Suffolk compiler believes 112 species were breeding within the area; 7 more might be and 14 were definitely

non-breeders. In the Northern Nassau count area, 99 species were thought to be breeding, 11 more are known to nest on Long Island, while 20 species were non-breeders. In both cases, the non-breeders represented lingering shorebirds, summering ducks and other late migrants or stragglers. The value of June counts seemed demonstrated by the discovery of several new breeding locations for rare Long Island breeders. On the Northern Nassau count, 8 Bobolinks, a species thought to be lost as breeders on Long Island, including two singing males, were present in Caumset at a location where a singing male was present in 1973. Four Hermit Thrushes were also present at Caumset. Brown Creepers were observed building a nest at the Muttontown Preserve; the only other known breeding location on Long Island is at Connetquot State Park where a high count of 17 Creepers was recorded this year. The third Long Island breeding record for the Red-breasted Nuthatch was photographed in Old Westbury (G. Bergin) and the fourth record was noted by observers in Brookhaven (DP). New sites for Grasshopper and Savannah Sparrows were found within the Northern Nassau area (RC). Central Suffolk observers were pleased to find American Bitterns breeding at Mastic and East Moriches; Least Bitterns were still present in the Carmen's River marshes. The Common Nighthawk apparently still persists as a breeder south of Riverhead. Eastern Bluebirds were holding their own at Connetquot and were present in small numbers in the Central Suffolk area.

Although compilers thought that spotty coverage of count areas was responsible for low counts of several species, all three found numbers of Chipping Sparrows reduced. Piping Plovers and Spotted Sandpipers were noted as low in numbers by Captree and Central Suffolk compilers. Grasshopper Sparrows were sparse on the Captree count, yet abundant in Central Suffolk with 41 noted. Red-tailed and Broad-winged Hawks, Clapper and Virginia Rails, and Horned Larks were also scarce in Central Suffolk. The Captree compiler noted reductions in E. Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrows, Black Ducks, American Kestrels, E. Kingbirds and Red-eyed Vireos. The Northern Nassau count seemed low on Red-winged Blackbirds, Green Herons, Mute Swans, Wood Ducks, and Killdeer.

Warblers were noted in unusually large numbers in Northern Nassau with 15 Chestnut-sided, 18 American Redstarts, 11 Black-and-white, 58 Blue-winged and 92 Yellow Warblers counted. Willow Flycatchers were present in at least five breeding locations. 81 Chimney Swifts were noted. Southern species were well represented with 285 Cardinals, 181 Mockingbirds and 35 Tufted Titmice. Central Suffolk noted good numbers of Mallards (345), a figure curiously matched exactly in Northern Nassau. Twenty-one Belted Kingfishers, 6 Orchard Orioles, 10 Tufted Titmice and 36 American Redstarts were also considered high count species. The Captree compiler noted both cuckoos, Veeries (114), Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (12), Scarlet Tanagers (18), Pine Warblers (58) and Prairie Warblers (51) as doing well, mainly in Connetquot.

SEA CLIFF COUNT: Practically every street and unpaved corner of Sea Cliff was walked between May 25th and May 31st by members of the Lyman Langdon Audubon Group. A surprising total of 65 species was found, including an Acadian Flycatcher (BS). It is interesting to note that within this one square mile of suburban area, the following numbers of common species were found: Mourning Dove 85, Blue Jay 88, Common Crow 23, Tufted Titmouse 8, Mockingbird 15, Gray Catbird 22, American Robin 198, Starling 237, House Sparrow 328, Northern Oriole 21, Common Grackle 168, Cardinal 61, House Finch 76 and Song Sparrow 18.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CENSUS OF TERN, GULL, AND HERON COLONIES: For the third year, P. A. and F. G. Buckley, this year with the assistance of M. Gochfeld, have compiled this aerial and ground count of known colonies. See *American Birds* for a breakdown by species, comparisons with previous counts, colony locations and movements. Their preliminary figures indicate the following total pairs:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Total Pairs</u>	<u>Largest Colony</u>	
Least Tern	2,446	Eaton's Neck	475
Common Tern	11,758	Great Gull Island	2,500
Roseate Tern	2,053	Great Gull Island	1,100
Black Skimmer	458	Cedar Beach	150
		Short Beach	150
Herring Gull	21,205	Gardiner's Island	7,320
Great Black-backed Gull	1,307	Gardiner's Island	1,025
Great Egret	410	Jones Beach Field I	220
Snowy Egret	932	Pearsall's Hassock	250
Cattle Egret	14	JBWR	10
Little Blue Heron	20	Seganus Thatch	11
Louisiana Heron	14	Seganus Thatch	7
Black-crowned Night Heron	516	Gardiner's Island	60
		Seganus Thatch	60
		Stony Brook	60
Glossy Ibis	644	Pearsall's Hassock	220

New heronries were discovered on Long Island Sound on Huckleberry Island (near Pelham Bay Park) and Robin's Island in Great Peconic Bay. The Huckleberry Island heronry, by conservative count, had three pairs of Great Egrets, five pairs of Snowy Egrets and eight pairs of Black-crowned Night Herons. In addition, what appeared to be a downy-headed (but flying) Great Blue Heron was observed there, although no adults were seen.

The heronry previously at Zach's Bay has been disbanded. The new heronries established at Freeport and Tobay Beach, plus additional birds present in groves at Jones Beach, probably represent birds from the Zach's Bay heronry.

Also noted along the South Shore were 46 pairs of Am. Oystercatchers and 83 pairs of Willets.

In comparing aerial count techniques with ground counts of nesting areas the following observations were made:

1. Estimates of pairs of gulls made by aerial techniques can exceed ground counts of actually occupied nests. It is thought that potential nesters are included in the aerial count; therefore the aerial count is a more accurate estimate of the total breeding population for a given season.

2. Common and Roseate Tern estimates are thought to be within plus or minus 15% of actual numbers; Least Tern and Black Skimmer estimates within 5%.

3. Heron colonies may be underestimated by at least 25% because adults leave the colony during the day with increasing frequency as the nestlings mature.

PELAGIC TRIPS: Four pelagic trips out of Montauk in June produced hard-to-find species: **June 7:** The Federation of N.Y.S. Bird Club's chartered trip to Cox's Ledge produced the following count: 13 Greater Shearwaters, 35 Sooty Shearwaters, 4 Manx Shearwaters, 15 Wilson's Storm Petrels, 6 Gannets, 1 Northern Phalarope, 1 Skua, 3 Pomarine Jaegers, 1 Parasitic Jaeger (THD, FGS, R. W. Smart, R. Ferren, K. Able, *et al.*).

June 15: To Cox's Ledge; 1 **NORTHERN FULMAR**, 70 Greater Shearwaters, 25 Sooty Shearwaters, 500 Wilson's Storm Petrels, 4 Pomarine Jaegers, 10 Parasitic Jaegers, 4 adult **LONG-TAILED JAEGER**s, (J. Zeranski, J. Gee, *et al.*).

June 18: 18 to 20 miles south of Montauk; 2 **NORTHERN FULMARS**, 80 Cory's Shearwaters, 20 Greater Shearwaters, 3 Sooty Shearwaters, 3 **SKUAS**, 4 Pomarine Jaegers, 5 Parasitic Jaegers.

June 21: To Cox's Ledge; 83 Cory's Shearwaters, 21 Greater Shearwaters, 3 Sooty Shearwaters, 25 Wilson's Storm Petrels, 1 SKUA, 2 Pomarine Jaegers, (J. Ash).

July 5, 6, 7: 30 to 70 miles southeast of Fire Island Inlet, while tuna fishing, observer Al Lorenzetti marveled at "unbelievable numbers of Shearwaters stretching as far as you could see." When pressed, he estimated that 10,000 birds were rafted on the water. From these numbers of birds, Lorenzetti noted 3 SKUAs and about 15 smaller black and white shearwaters. While he noted 50 or 60 Cory's Shearwaters, the majority were Greaters or Sooties. The water temperature was 74°, suggesting southern influence.

Observers: FB—Fran Buckley; PAB—Paul A. Buckley; TWB—Thomas W. Burke; BHC—Barbara H. Conolly; THD—Thomas D. Davis; SBD—Stephen B. Dempsey; DWF—Davis W. Finch; HF—Howie Fisher; MG—Michael Gochfeld; GK—George Kleinbaum; DL—David Larsen; ML—Manny Levine; AJL—Anthony J. Lauro; BL—Brook Lauro; PL—Paul Lehman; HMcG—Hugh McGuinness; GSR—Gilbert S. Raynor; JR—John Rusica; FGS—Fritz G. Scheider; BJS—Barbara J. Spencer.

LOONS—DUCKS: Red-throated Loon: 1 JBWR, June 13-20 (GK *et al.*). Com. Eider: 1 Orient Point, June 9 (PAB, MG). King Eider: 2 females Montauk June 9 with 80 Black and Surf Scoters (PAB, MG).

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Red-shouldered Hawk: 1 JBWR, June 21 (GK). Black Rail: 1 Jo Co Marsh June 11 (PAB). **PURPLE GALLINULE:** 1 adult Mamaroneck July 16-21 (mob). Am. Golden Plover: 1 North Line Island July 11 (extremely early) (GSR, DL, JR). **LONG-BILLED CURLEW:** 1 North Line Island July 4-30, (AJL, BL, SD *et al.* photographed by THD, DWF, PAB, BHC *et al.*) Whimbrel 1, South Line Island June 12 (AJL, BL, BJS). Upland Sandpiper: at least 2 pairs persist at Mitchell Field (mob), max 21 Westhampton (AFB) July 8 (HMcG). Dunlin: 6 arrived North Line Island July 4 (AJL *et al.*). **CURLEW SANDPIPER:** 1 Freeport July 20 (E. Levine); showed traces of breeding plumage. Stilt Sandpiper: 2 arrived North Line Island July 11 (GSR, DL, JR). Western Sandpiper: 1 arrived North Line Island July 11 (GSR, DL, JR). Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 2 Sagaponack August 21 (BS), 3 Oak Beach August 23 (AJL). Marbled Godwit: 1 North Line Island June 11 (PAB, MG *et al.*), joined by a second bird on July 8 and a third on July 11. Hudsonian Godwit: 4 arrived North Line Island July 17 (BJS *et al.*), high count of 15 August 8 (BJS, BHC). Ruff: 1 "black Ruff" North Line Island July 16-20 (mob), photographed by DWF; 1 "molting black Ruff" North Line Island July 17 (BJS *et al.*), 1 "black and white Ruff" North Line Island July 24-26 (mob). Northern Phalarope: 1 Freeport August 10 (A. Daniels), 1 Tobay Sanctuary August 23 (SD). Wilson's Phalarope: 1 North Line Island, July 24 (DWF, FGS, BL). Pomarine Jaeger: 1 adult JBWR, June 17 (GK), first refuge record. Black-headed Gull: 1 adult, Princess Bay, Staten Island, June 8-9 (HF *et al.*). Little Gull: 1 sub-adult, Princess Bay, Staten Island, June 8-9 (HF *et al.*); 1 adult and 4 sub-adults, Princess Bay, Staten Island (HF). **GULL-BILLED TERN:** 2 pairs nested South Line Island, first state breeding record (PAB, MG, THD *et al.*), at least one adult present to July 13 at JBWR (mob), 1 Moriches Inlet July 8 (HMcG). **BRIDLED TERN** (probable): On July 20 about 7:30 p.m. were fishing in surf at Democrat Point (AJL, BL). A strong, southerly wind, 15/20 mph had been blowing all day. A large adult, dark-winged tern appeared, flying 20/30 feet overhead. The bird appeared to be capped, with a definite break between the cap and dark back. The tail was deeply forked. The underside of the primaries was white, matching the color of the underside of the secondaries. The back and topside of the wings appeared very dark, almost black. An examination of skins at the AMNH disclosed that birds taken from in West Indies have the color of the mantle ranging from light gray to dark gray. None of the Bridled Terns examined had dark undersides to the primaries, which was evident in all of the Sooty Terns examined. All Sooty Terns examined, both adults and immatures, had black or gray napes. The only inconsistency of the bird noted in the field, as compared with study skins, was

the very dark mantle; hence the bird is listed as "probable." Royal Tern: 2 Rye, July 20 (PL *et al.*), 1 Tobay Sanctuary Aug 9 (ML). **SOOTY TERN**: An adult was present for three hours in a tern colony, Shinnecock, May 20 (Leroy Wilcox).

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Short-eared Owl: family group of 6, Ruffle Bar, JBWR, June 21 (THD). **CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW**: Pair fledged 2 young, Oak Beach (THD *et al.*), first state breeding record; 1 calling bird Shinnecock Hills, late June, early July (C. McGuinness *et al.*). Red-bellied Woodpecker, Aug. 9 Tobay Sanctuary, (ML), rare on barrier beach.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Acadian Flycatcher: 2 Mill Neck, June 7 (BJS, BHC); 1 JBWR June 15-16 calling from phragmites (GK *et al.*). Common Crow: pair fledged 2 young at Oak Beach (THC); unusual on barrier beach.

VIREOS-WARBLES: Lawrence's Warbler: 1 territorial male Scarsdale June 9 (J. Hein, B. Weissman) Connecticut Warbler: Alley Pond Park August 21 (SD); early.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Evening Grosbeak: 1 female at feeder in Stuyvesant Town July 4 (S. Madden).

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