

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

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Rain fell on 46-count 'em—46 days this summer, 14 in June, 18 in July, 14 in August, with four days the longest period without rain in the last two months. However, June, though cold, had near normal precipitation. In July, an oppressive heat wave held sway the third week and rainfall over the Southern Tier was 5.4 in. (13.7 cm) above average with flash floods the first week but the Buffalo area was normal. In August, with near average temperatures, over 10 in. (25.4 cm) rain deluged the Buffalo area, but the Southern Tier received only 1.8 in. (4.6 cm) above normal.

The cold, frequent rains killed some nestlings by exposure, or by starvation in the case of Phoebe and Barn Swallows. Vegetation, stunted by the dry May, quickly burgeoned when the rains came, and the usual late-August defoliation was absent. As for the wild food crop, a Pied Piper's population of mice, in addition to a bounty of black cherries, apples, berries and filling cones, should carry into fall and winter.

This 11th year of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Surveys—BBS hereafter—recorded 18,253 individuals and 116 species from 18 out of 19 routes. Below, status for a species is noted as (H+) = highest ever, or tied, (H) = one of top 3 totals, (S) = stable, (L) = one of low 3 totals, or (L-) = lowest ever, or tied. From 16 out of 17 routes of this 8th year of the Allegany Co. "Mini-Run" Breeding Bird Surveys—Abbs, hereafter—7,896 individuals and 96 species were counted (See *Kingbird*, Vol. XX, No. 4). Below, status for a species is indicated as (H+) = highest ever, (sd+) = above one standard deviation, (S) = stable, or (sd-) = below one standard deviation.

On the bright side are: 1) an excellent showing of Turkey Vultures and most hawks, 2) the Turkey population increasing beautifully, 3) an *exciting* shorebird flight, 4) discovery of a better mouse trap, 5) Chimney Swifts, and Pileated, Red-headed and Hairy Woodpeckers more than holding their own, but Downies down, 6) high counts of Black-capped Chickadees, 7) fair breeding population of E. Bluebirds with varied success, 8) a slow but promising warbler movement beginning in mid-August, 9) low—way low—numbers of House Sparrows and Starlings, a favor from the rough winter, and 10) an abundance of Cardinals, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Indigo Buntings.

On the summer's dark side are: 1) low numbers of Green Herons, 2) fewer Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks on BBS, 3) low breeding survey counts of Ring-necked Pheasants, Com. Gallinules, Com. Snipe, Upland Sandpipers (habitat lost to maturing tree farms, Cattaraugus Co. [SE]), and Spotted Sandpipers, 4) a flying success for Rock Doves, 5) hint of replacement of Black-billed Cuckoos by Yellow-billed—not all bad—, 6) general low status for Purple Martins, Bank and Rough-winged Swallows and for flycatchers, with many E. Phoebes missing from usual sites, 7) Horned Larks still weak but slightly better on Abbs, 8) Tufted Titmice, Mockingbirds and Carolina Wrens nearly wiped out by the hard winter, 9) some House Wrens missing or producing barren nests—but the usual terror at Tree Swallow and E. Bluebird boxes, 10) fewer Gray Catbirds, Brown Thrashers and most thrushes, 11) continuing steady decline of E. Meadowlark populations, 12) increased Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism, and 13) most sparrows still doing poorly.

Summer rarities are: Cattle Egret, Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, American Avocet, Wilson's Phalarope, Barn Owl, Acadian Flycatcher, Prothonotary Warbler, "Brewster's" Warbler, Prairie Warbler, and House Finch.

Abbreviations: GMA or WMA—Game or Wildlife Management Area; NWR—National Wildlife Refuge; SF—State Forest; SP—State Park; Twp—Township.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Single Com. Loons were still seen at Buffalo Harbor June 2 (RA) and at Amity L June 12 (VP, RP). Single **CATTLE EGRETS** were at Alabama June 8 (JM) and very late at Clarence July 31 (DF). A Black-crowned Night Heron appeared on BBS (H) with no other reports except one at Times Beach June 1, 2 (RA) and Aug. 29 (DF). A Least Bittern was noted at Iroquois NWR June 22 (JM). This species was found nesting, 3 eggs, at Tift Farm June 11 where an Am. Bittern nest, 3 yg + 1 egg, was also located the same day (RA+). A late Whistling Swan was at Oak Orchard WMA June 11 (AS+). Although the resident pair of Canada Geese spent the summer at Farmersville Sta. (DC, JC), the family near Hume disappeared early this season (M. Hodnett); singles were at Wellsville June 23 and at Belmont June 24-Aug. 30 (DB, LB) (same bird?) Choice duck sightings include: Gadwall: 4 at Iroquois NWR June 11 (AS+) and 2 at S. Buffalo July 7 (DF); Am. Wigeon: at Times Beach, max 5 until July 22 (RA+) and max 25 on Aug. 24 (DF), as well as at Iroquois NWR, 4 on June 11 (AS+); a N. Shoveler at Iroquois NWR June 11 (AS+); 60 Wood Ducks, Hume Twp, Aug. 16 (DB, LB, Palmer); 1 late Redhead at Times Beach June 16 (RA); one oddball Ruddy Duck on Amity L July 2 (VP); and Hooded Merganser June fledglings: 7 at Farmersville Sta. (DC, JC) and 11 near Alfred (EB).

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Hawks with status other than "S" on breeding surveys were: Turkey Vulture: 7 on BBS (H+); Sharp-shinned: one on BBS (H); Cooper's: one on BBS (H+); Red-tailed: 11 on BBS (L); Red-shouldered: 2 on BBS (L); Broad-winged: 5 on BBS (H+); and Am. Kestrel: 23 on BBS (H). Other Turkey Vulture reports were: one at Farmersville Sta. July 19 (DC) and max 20 at Salamanca July 3-31 (JF, MFr). A **GOSHAWK** was found in Allegany SP June 5 (RS); two Allegany Co. **GOSHAWK** nests produced a total of 3 yg, banded in June (Shriver *vide* DB). Sharp-shinned Hawks totaled only 6 from 4 areas. However, a Cooper's Hawk nest with two 2-day old chicks and 2 eggs "hammering" was located in Ward Twp June 12 (Shriver *vide* DB) and 4 other birds were identified from 3 locations. In Allegany Co. a total of 6 yg. in 2 Red-shouldered Hawk nests and 2 yg. in that of a Broad-winged were banded June 12 (Shriver *vide* DB). An adult **BALD EAGLE** appeared near Olean July 6 (JF, MFr). Although Ruffed Grouse were absent this year for the first time on Abbs, they were well reported with max 16 at Allenberg Bog July 2 (Knox, Nutting); 10 yg. were found near Alfred in June (EB, CK). On BBS were 141 Ring-necked Pheasants (L-). A Com. Gallinule's nest was found with 7 eggs at Tift Farm June 11 (RA+). The pick of the plover and sandpiper reports includes: Am. Golden Plover: one at Prendergast Pt. Aug. 19 (Sundells) and 6 at Clarence Aug. 25 (DF); Black-bellied Plover: one at Times Beach June 3 (RA) and 14 at Shadigee Aug. 20 (DF); Upland Sandpiper: 6 on BBS (L) but no less than 26 others counted from 6 locations, including 4 nesting pairs in Cattaraugus Co. (SE); Solitary Sandpiper: one at Burgeson Sanctuary July 2 (RS, Kibler), and 6 at Iroquois NWR Aug. 9 (DF); Greater Yellowlegs: early at Times Beach, one on June 30 (RA) and a max 10 on July 7 (RA, DF+); Pectoral Sandpiper: 2 at Buffalo Harbor July 28 (AS) and one at Times Beach Aug. 29 (DF); Baird's Sandpiper: one at Times Beach Aug. 29 (DF); Dunlin: one again 3 weeks early at Times Beach July 7, 10 (DF, RA+) and another there Aug. 29 (DF); Short-billed Dowitcher: an early invasion, with 3 at Times Beach June 30 (RA) and a max 74 here July 7 (DF+), the same day 10 were at Buffalo Harbor (DF); Stilt Sandpiper: one early at Buffalo July 7 (DF) with 6 others totaled from 3 areas; Semipalmated Sandpiper: one early at Times Beach June 30 (RA); **BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER**: two at Clarence Aug. 27 (Freelands); **AMERICAN AVOCET**: one at S. Buffalo Aug. 12 (Heyer, Wheaton, DF, FR)—*extremely* rare but expected (see *Kingbird* XXIII July 1973, p. 138);

and **WILSON'S PHALAROPE**: one at Iroquois NWR Aug. 9 (DF). 'Twas a lackadaisical larid summer but for: Franklin's Gull: singles at Prendergast Pt. Aug. 19-21 (Sundells, Kibler) and at Buffalo Aug. 30 (DF); Bonaparte's Gull: max 3,000 at Buffalo Aug. 21 (DF); Little Gull: one on Aug. 6 and 2 on Aug. 30 at Buffalo (DF); Forster's Tern: one at Times Beach Aug. 24 (DF); and Caspian Tern: only 2 all season.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: A **BARN OWL** was located at E. Amherst June 17 (DF). This species, a superb ratter, is being brought into Satellite Beach, Fla., for rodent control. (*Wellsville Daily Reporter*, Aug. 29, 1977)—Can the rats who shoot owls and hawks be controlled?—Great Horned Owl July fledgling reports were: 2 at Farmersville Sta. (DC, JC, SE) and 2 at Scio (VP). A Long-eared Owl was noted at Killbuck July 3 (JF, MFr), and 3 yg were banded in the nest near Birdsall June 12 (Shriver *vide* DB). Three Whip-poor-wills were found on Potter Rd., Chautauqua Twp, June 6 (RS, Moe) and one at Java Aug. 8 (DF). A big flock of early migrating Com. Nighthawks appeared over Olean July 31 (F. Meyer, *Olean Times Herald*, Sept. 1, 1977), and 50 were seen in Tonawanda-Amherst area Aug. 27 (Freelands); other reports were: 3 at Olean July 27 (JF, MFr) and one at Belmont Aug. 26 (DB, LB). Two adult Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers fed yg. in hole June 11 by Conewango Creek, Cattaraugus Co., at 1,285 ft. elevation, lowest to date in the county (SE).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Noteworthy flycatchers on breeding surveys were: E. Phoebe: 20 on BBS (L-), and 62 on Abbs (sd-); Least Flycatcher: 40 on BBS (L-); E. Wood Pewee: 32 on BBS (L-). Two E. Kingbird nests near Amity L produced 5 fledglings (VP). E. Phoebe nestings reported from Cattaraugus Co. resulted in only 2 out of 8 prs successful with poor 2nd nestings (SE). In Allegany Co. out of 21 E. Phoebe nestings, 10 succeeded, producing 36 yg; near Scio one nest failed when owner closed barn doors and the yg in nest starved. There were 4 Alder Flycatcher nestlings near Alfred July 20 (EB), and Least Flycatchers fledged 4 yg at Amity L July 13 (VP). The only report of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers was one at E. Amherst Aug. 19 (DF). Single **ACADIAN FLYCATCHERS** were spotted at Randolph June 4 (RA+) and near Barcelona July 4 (RS). An Olive-sided Flycatcher appeared at Newstead Aug. 19 (DF). A new colony of Cliff Swallows was discovered near Randolph (SE), and 4 yg Rough-winged Swallows fledged at Scio July 4 (VP). The Tufted Titmouse, on BBS for the past 2 years, was missing this year and a total of only 10 birds was reported from 6 areas. Counted from scattered locations were 6 Red-breasted Nuthatches and 10 Brown Creepers. Noteworthy wren reports are: Winter: total 3 birds from 2 areas; Carolina: one on BBS (H) plus *only one other report*: 2 at Chestnut Ridge Park June 30 (O'Dell); Long-billed Marsh: 2 on BBS (H); and Short-billed Marsh: total, only 5 birds in 2 areas. The Mockingbird, on BBS for the past 2 years, was missing on this survey; the only reports were singles at Varysburg June 22 (DF) and at Belmont June 27 (VP, RP). 59 Veeries on Abbs rated "H+." Swainson's Thrushes were found at E. Amherst, one on Aug. 19 and 3 on Aug. 26 (DF). E. Bluebirds tallied 3 on Abbs (sd-); near Alfred one pair had poor breeding success (CK), but in Amity and near Bolivar, 5 pairs fledged over 18 yg (VP); a total 12 other birds appeared in 7 locations. A single Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen at Times Beach Aug. 24 (DF). Still going strong are Regional Golden-crowned Kinglets and 5 yg were seen near Alfred in late July (EB). A max 6 Ruby-crowned Kinglets appeared off and on in Allegany SP June 4-July 24 (mob) and one arr early at E. Amherst Aug. 19 (DF). A single Loggerhead Shrike was found at Porter Ave., Buffalo, Aug. 6 (Freelands).

VIREOS—WARBLERS: Single Philadelphia Vireos were at E. Amherst Aug. 19, early, and at Clarence Aug. 25 (DF). Extraordinary breeding survey warbler ratings were: Chestnut-sided: 18 on BBS (L-) but 37 on Abbs (H+); and Com. Yellowthroats: 241 on BBS (H+) and 206 on Abbs (H+). A **PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** was in old haunts at Iroquois NWR again June 11 (AS+), and a "**BREWSTER'S**" WARBLER appeared at Amity L July 11 (VP). In August over 8 migrating Tennessee Warblers were counted from 4 areas. Nashville Warbler was seen on and off in 2 Alfred areas July 1-18 (CK, EB). Late again were max 3 N. Parulas in Allegany SP June 4, 5 (DF, RA, RS+). 3 yg Yellow-rumped Warblers were

noted near Alfred July 28 (EB) and one yg was found at McCarty Hill, Ellicottville, July 24 (RA+). Other noteworthy warblers were: a Cerulean Warbler on BBS (H); a max 2 Pine Warblers in Phillips Creek SF June 7, 12 (CK, EB, RA+)—very late; late **PRAIRIE WARBLERS**: one in Carroll June 4 (RA+), and max 9 intermittently near Alfred June 2-24 (EB, CK, RA+); and Yellow-breasted Chat: one on BBS (H)—the only report.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Noteworthy on breeding surveys were: House Sparrow: 919 on BBS (L-) and 287 on Abbs (sd-); and E. Meadowlark: 330 on BBS (L-) and 74 on Abbs (sd-). **HOUSE FINCHES**, widely reported, were seen in two new areas: Angelica, with 2 on June 4-6 (R. Wesche); and Jamestown, with 2 at the Community College June 13, as well as max 8 at a feeder June 18-Aug. 12 which includes 2 yg July 17 (RS); June fledgling reports were 3 at Cuba (AnS) and 2 at Belmont (DB, LB). In Allegany Co. from 24 Am. Goldfinch nests, the 11 successful fledged at least 45 yg (VP). Sparrows in the desperate "L-" status on BBS were 13 Vesper and 147 Field, and rated "sd-" on Abbs were 63 Savannah and 3 Grasshopper. An interesting White-crowned Sparrow was found on BBS, but not counted as a nester. The White-throated Sparrow nested again near Alfred (EB), and late birds were found as: max 4 in Phillips Creek SF June 7, 12 (EB, CK+), max 3 near Alfred July 3-19 (CK, EB), and one near Petrolia June 21 (VP, RP).

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 — GENESEE

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The season began with an exciting, yet at times confusing, extension of the spring migration. Shorebirds, several of them very rare for the region, continued to move through the Northrup Creek area during the month of June. By June 25, the numbers of yellowlegs and peep gathering, indicated probable fall returns. Gulls and terns finally arrived in numbers in mid-June accompanied by several rare visitors. Hawks and eagles continued to straggle over Braddock Bay's Hawk Lookout through the month. June also saw area birders scattering away from the lakeshore with very interesting results; numbers of normally more northerly nesting species were discovered in the hill country to the south. July brought a number of interesting reports amid generally hot, dull birding. The eagerly awaited August shorebirding failed to materialize. The passerine passage was generally normal and unspectacular.

June stretched the warm, dry spell through to the last week. The first half of July was very hot, highs often near or above 90-95° F (32-35° C), and humid with occasional heavy rains. The last half of July moderated to more normal temperatures and rainfall. August saw heavy rains cut into the year's deficit. The succession of cold fronts brought a few record and near record low temperatures early in the month, but no waves of birds until some major pushes in the final ten days.

True trends for the season are difficult to separate from weather, habitat, and observer fluctuations. The water bird picture is clouded by weather/habitat interactions without any real population changes. Early low water levels resulted in few reports of waders, yet by August with high water, good numbers were reported, particularly of Great Blue Herons. Early warming of Lake Ontario waters moved the ducks along early with fewer than normal late Spring and Summer lingerers. The combination of dry fields and isolated good shoreline habitat produced exciting June shorebirding, but then allowed the marsh grasses to expand their holdings so that with the rising waters later there were few observable resting places for fall migrants. The raptor picture is complicated by observer trends. This year the