

REGION 3 – FINGER LAKES

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June was a cool month averaging four degrees F (7.2° C) below normal. July and August were about normal. Thru mid-month, July was hot but finished up cool. August started hot, went to very cool from the 20th-25th and ended warm. Rainfall was about normal in the southern part of the Region. In the north, June and July were very dry, followed by frequent rains in August.

This weather pattern had a direct effect on shorebirding at MNWR. By July 1 the water level had dropped enough to expose some mudflats and the early fall migrant shorebirds came in. They increased in number and variety thru July as the mudflats widened. The August rains reversed the process. By mid-month, the mudflats were gone as were the shorebirds. At the end of the period, almost no shorebirds were present compared to last year's fantastic display on the partially drained Tschache pool.

The Trumansburg Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Census produced the highest number of Cardinals ever. Eastern Wood Pewee, Common Yellowthroat, Common Grackle and Dark-eyed Junco came in with the second highest totals in the 12 year history of the count. On the other side of the coin, no Eastern Kingbirds or Cedar Waxwings were found for the first time.

Among the positive trends of the season were the best numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons and Least Bitterns at MNWR since 1972; excellent numbers of Wood Ducks; increased Upland Sandpiper reports; continued high population of Mourning Doves; though still few in number, a small increase in sightings of both cuckoos; an abundance of House Wrens and American Goldfinches; the continued expansion in the range and numbers of House Finches.

Negatives include but one Great Egret report; very few Rough-winged or Cliff Swallows; fewer White-breasted Nuthatches; drastically reduced numbers of Carolina Wrens; the absence of Short-billed Marsh Wrens from their recent haunts at MNWR; continued low numbers of Savannah and, especially, Vesper Sparrows. Malcolm Lerch comments that at Penn Yan all species seem to be down.

Rarities: Golden Eagle, Long-billed Dowitcher, Ruff, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, a possible Western Tanager.

Corrigendum: *The Kingbird* (Vol. XXVII, No. 2, page 100) under Golden-crowned Kinglet, place a period (rather than a semi-colon) after "1 at Penn Yan feeder thru Feb" and insert Ruby-crowned Kinglet before "1 eating suet at Clifton Springs Jan. 7-16."

Abbreviations: arr—arrival date; dep—departure date; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; Sen—Seneca; SBC—Summer Bird Count sponsored by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs preceded by G for Geneva (June 12) or I for Ithaca (June 18) and each count covering the corresponding Christmas Bird Count circle; TBBS—Trumansburg Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Census 12th Year (June 12); WD—Waterloo dump; * (starred)—details on file.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Common Loon: 1 GSBC; 1 Keuka L thru. Horned Grebe: 1 Sen L Jul. 16-17 (BH). Pied-billed Grebe: 65 MNWR Aug. 16; no longer nests at Penn Yan marsh. Great Egret: 1 MNWR Aug. 13 only sighting. Black-crowned Night Heron: best season since

1972 at MNWR. Least Bittern: best numbers at MNWR since the Agnes wipeout in 1972 with 8 sighted Aug. 13. Canada Goose: observers at Clifton Springs, Branchport and Elmira report seeing flocks in late Aug. Early migrants or are the local birds at MNWR moving out?

Ducks: the maximum counts reported by the MNWR personnel are as follows:

5,000 Mallard	Aug. 31	2,200 Blue-winged Teal	Aug. 31
350 Black	Jul. 31	150 Am. Wigeon	Jun. 30
2,000 Gadwall	Aug. 31	375 N. Shoveler	Jul. 31
250 Pintail	Aug. 31	2,000 Wood Duck	Aug. 31
1,000 Green-winged Teal	Aug. 31	100 Hooded Merganser	Aug. 31

Redhead: 3 GSBC. Hooded Merganser: 7 ISBC.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: 4 GSBC; numbers up at Penn Yan. Goshawk: young banded at nests at Dresden and 3 at Brooktondale June 6. Sharp-shinned: nested at Camp Dittmer south of Phelps (PT). Broad-winged: 2 Elmira Jun. 28 (WH); 2 E. Corning Jun. 30 (T. Bates); 2 Watkins Glen State Park Aug. 19 (JB). Bald Eagle: in a continuation of last year's program, 5 young eagles were raised at MNWR. These were flying by the end of the period. One of last year's birds returned in Aug. In addition, an unmarked immature bird was seen. **GOLDEN EAGLE:** immature E. Corning Aug. 25 (SS)*. Marsh Hawk: 2 GSBC. Osprey: 1 ISBC. Merlin: 1 Savannah Mucklands Aug. 16, no details (SS). Am. Kestrel: doing well. Semipalmated Plover: late spring migrants 2 ISBC and 3 MNWR both Jun. 18; first fall birds 4 MNWR Jul. 19; max 15 MNWR Jul. 31. Killdeer: 64 GSBC. Am. Woodcock: successful nest near Clyde. Upland Sandpiper: absent at Penn Yan for the first time in many years but otherwise well reported with 25 at Horseheads Jun. 27. Solitary Sandpiper: 3 MNWR Jul. 5; 3 Ithaca Aug. 25. Greater Yellowlegs: arr fall 1 MNWR Jul. 5 max 18 Jul. 13. Lesser Yellowlegs: dep spring 1 MNWR Jun. 19; arr fall 1 MNWR Jul. 1 max 86 Jul. 19. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr fall 1 MNWR Jul. 13 max 10 Jul. 31; 8 Aurora Aug. 16. White-rumped Sandpiper: dep spring 6 MNWR Jun. 8; arr fall 2 MNWR Jul. 26. Least Sandpiper: arr fall 3 MNWR Jul. 1 max 13 Jul. 31. Dunlin: dep spring 1 MNWR Jun. 8. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr fall 4 MNWR Jul. 3 max 26 Jul. 29; 1 Horseheads Aug. 7. **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER:** 1 Corning Aug. 4 (MW)*; 1 MNWR Aug. 13 (Genesee Ornithological Society). Stilt Sandpiper: arr fall 2 MNWR Jul. 8 max 6 Jul. 13 all in reasonably good breeding plumage. Semipalmated Sandpiper: dep spring 150 MNWR Jun. 1; arr fall 43 MNWR Jul. 13 max 118 Jul. 22. **RUFF:** 1 WD Aug. 12 (JG)* and seen again Aug. 13 by Genesee Ornithological Society and believed to have been a female (Reeve). Wilson's Phalarope: 1 MNWR Jul. 31 and 1 WD Aug. 12 both (WB). Ring-billed Gull: 1,500 WD Aug. 12. Common Tern: 4 adults 1 young MNWR Jul. 26. Black Tern: fewer at MNWR and gone by Aug. 11.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1 MNWR Aug. 11; 1 Ithaca Aug. 16; nested near Orleans (Paris Trail). Barn Owl: 1 near Chemung probably nested in an old barn (WH); 5 Painted Post Aug. 4 (MW). Barred Owl: 1 Ithaca Aug. 22 (SS). Common Nighthawk: 1 ISBC; 1 Clifton Springs late June; 1 Reeders Creek, Sen Co. Aug. 20; 75 flying over Southport Aug. 26 and 150 Aug. 27. Pileated Woodpecker: 3 young raised at Stewart Park, Ithaca; 2 ISBC; 1 GSBC. Red-bellied Woodpecker: 5 GSBC; 2 ISBC. Red-headed Woodpecker: 10 GSBC; widely reported from all parts of the Region with at least 7 nesting pairs in the Clifton Springs-Phelps area.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Eastern Kingbird: 43 ISBC; 21 GSBC. Great Crested Flycatcher: 14 GSBC; 35 ISBC. Eastern Phoebe: back to normal on the TBBS but still down in some areas; 23 ISBC; 11 GSBC. **YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER:** 1 Union Springs Aug. 16 (SS)*. Willow Flycatcher: 6 GSBC; 15 ISBC. Alder Flycatcher: 3 ISBC. Least Flycatcher: numerous reports; 9 GSBC; 31 ISBC. Eastern Wood Pewee; 22 GSBC; 39 ISBC. **OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER:** 1 MNWR Aug. 20 (WB). Bank Swallow: few reports; colony at Tyre abandoned but new colony at Junius Ponds. Rough-winged Swallow: very scarce; 9 ISBC; pair apparently nesting south of Dundee late June. Cliff Swallow: a pair at

Penn Yan and 5 ISBC are the only reports. Purple Martin: mixed reports; good, but under 1976, at MNWR; 3 houses well occupied at Phelps; scattered pairs elsewhere. White-breasted Nuthatch: harder to find than usual. Red-breasted Nuthatch: 3 ISBC; 4 Union Springs Aug. 16; 1 Watkins Glen Aug. 19; fewer at Tanglewood, Elmira. Carolina Wren: 2 ISBC; 1 singing at Phelps only reports. Mockingbird: 2 TBBS; 2 GSBC; 14 ISBC. Eastern Bluebird: fewer reports of sightings or nests than last year. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 2 GSBC; 1 ISBC; nested at Reeders Creek, Sen Co.; 1 MNWR Aug. 16. Golden-crowned Kinglet: present all summer at Tanglewood (WO). Cedar Waxwing: at Phelps a pair built a nest on top of last year's Am. Goldfinch nest. Loggerhead Shrike: no reports.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-throated Vireo: reported from Ithaca area only. Philadelphia: 1 Ithaca Aug. 25. Warbling: 31 GSBC; 21 ISBC. No waves of warblers had come thru but by the end of the period the expected species had been found in small numbers. Yellow-rumped Warblers were at Tanglewood, Elmira all summer. Resident Yellows and Common Yellowthroats were in good numbers.

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Orchard Oriole: 1 ISBC. **WESTERN TANAGER:** a possible sighting Ithaca Aug. 21 (JG)*. Cardinal: 32 TBBS; 60 GSBC; 125 ISBC. Purple Finch: 22 ISBC and many scattered reports. House Finch: expanding at an accelerated rate in most of the Region; 30 found roosting in a spruce tree in Elmira. Am. Goldfinch: abundant, even non-birders were asking where all the "wild canaries" came from. Savannah Sparrow: 22 GSBC; 31 ISBC; several commented on reduced numbers. Grasshopper Sparrow: 3 TBBS; 1 GSBC; 3 ISBC; numbers up at Horseheads. Henslow's Sparrow: 8 ISBC. Vesper Sparrow: continues to be reported very sparingly; 3 GSBC; 1 King Ferry Aug. 16, 3 Penn Yan. Dark-eyed Junco: 15 ISBC. White-throated Sparrow: 1 singing thru July at Tanglewood, Elmira. Song Sparrow: back down to normal on TBBS after last year's extreme high; ML had banded very few by the end of the period compared to last year's abundance; generally still found in good numbers.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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Again a substantial portion of the data available for the summer season was contained in the results from the Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes run in the Region. With the help of Danny Bystrak, the data from 12 of the 13 routes are available at this writing with the Vestal Center route the only one missing. 10,389 individuals of 103 species were recorded on these 12 routes, compared to 11,288 individuals of 109 species on 13 routes in 1976. After a simple arithmetic adjustment to compensate for the missing route, there was a decrease of only 0.3 per cent in individuals.

Using the same adjustment on a species by species basis, but only considering species that had counts of 30 or more one year or the other, 4 species decreased and 8 species increased by a third or more. The losers (and per cent loss) were Eastern Phoebe (42), Killdeer (38), House Wren (36) and Rufous-sided Towhee (33). Gainers (and per cent gain) were Purple Finch (225), Bank Swallow (95), Yellow-throated Vireo (87), Tree Swallow (62), Black-capped Chickadee (44), Scarlet Tanager (36), Chimney Swift (35) and Downy Woodpecker (34). No claims of statistical significance are being made for any species, but the colonial nature of Bank Swallows makes that result highly questionable. Only the Purple Finch and Yellow-throated Vireo increases were noticeable in other reports received for the period.