

REGION 4 – SUSQUEHANNA

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There was nothing remarkable about the weather for the summer period. Precipitation was a little on the high side and well distributed throughout the period so there was never a serious threat of drought. June temperatures were a little on the low side and July's a little on the high side but the most pronounced heat wave lasted about a week in mid-August.

As usual a large portion of the bird data collected for the season came from the Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) routes run in the Region, even though the results of only seven of the thirteen were available in time. Those seven produced 5339 individuals of 96 species, compared to 5943 individuals of 94 species on the same seven survey routes last year, a decrease of 10.2 per cent in individuals. The same comparison on a species-by-species basis, but only considering species with counts of 30 or more at least one of the two years, shows seven species decreasing and five species increasing by a third or more. The losers (and percent loss) were Common Flicker (58), Common Grackle (45), Chimney Swift (43), Am. Goldfinch (38), Veery (37), Starling (35) and Black-capped Chickadee (33). Gainers (and percent gain) were Cedar Waxwing (75), Killdeer (50), Cardinal (40), Chestnut-sided Warbler (38) and Northern Oriole (36). Such numbers must, of course, be examined critically before one even considers coming to any conclusions. Starlings and grackles may only be on the list because of earlier dates, before post-breeding flocking had progressed as far as the previous year. We expect erratic fluctuations in waxwing numbers, but Killdeer, swifts and chickadees were all in the opposite list last year, suggesting that their populations, but more probably our measurement of their populations, are also erratic.

The breeding bird survey information does tend to concentrate our attention on the early part of the summer season but a Swainson's Thrush, Tennessee Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, *etc.* in mid-August are at least a hint of the beginning of the fall migration.

We are still losing our grassland sparrows. Of the group only Savannah Sparrows remain in any numbers at all. Summer resident Hermit Thrushes were also down, but hopefully only temporarily. On the plus side the increasing number of summer Yellow-rumped Warblers is seemingly an established and welcome trend. There are precedents, although not many for the mid-June Swainson's Thrush. But the mid-June Northern Parula was more of a surprise, and, along with a Clay-colored Sparrow and a Northern Phalarope counts as a rarity for this Region.

The totals for each species recorded on one or more of the seven breeding bird surveys on hand at this writing are reported below in the form "(8,5)", to be read "8 individuals on 5 surveys." The surveys included are: Oxford, June 4, Harriet Marsi; Vestal Center, June 8, Elva Hawken; E. Newark, June 11, Elva Hawken; McDonough, June 17, Claude Howard; Coventryville, June 18, Leslie Bemont; Whitney Point, June 18, Robert Pantle; Lisle, June 24, Robert Pantle.

Other contributing observers: Cutler and Jeanette Baldwin; Reynolds Bennett; Mildred Clark; Anna and Marilyn Davis (A, MD); Mary Dobinsky (MD); Sadie Dorber; Evelyn and Bud Mead (E, BM); Mary Sheffield (MS); Robert Sheffield (RS); Donald Weber (DW); Cora Wellman (CW); Ruth and Sally White (R, SW); Kathryn Wilson (KW).

Abbreviations used: Port—Portlandville; Mil—Milford.

LOONS—DUCKS: Great Blue Heron: (4,3); the usual scattered reports of one to four birds but no colony checks. Green Heron: only a half dozen reports, apparently down in numbers. Mallard: (2,2); 38 Aug. 19 and 29 Aug. 21 in two Oneonta area localities. Black Duck: four Oneonta area Aug. 3 and a mention from Owego; no others. Wood Duck: 15 Port Aug. 3, the best count, but fairly numerous reports of small flocks in Jul. and Aug.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: almost all the reports received were from Delaware and Otsego Cos. Sharp-shinned Hawk: only two reports. Cooper's Hawk: only one report. Red-tailed Hawk: (5,3). Red-shouldered Hawk: (1,1) Oxford BBS; one Mil-Port Jun. 10. Broad-winged Hawk: (2,1); 14 other reports. Bald Eagle: one Choconut Center Jun. 10, immature (MS, RS)—marked with reddish streak across wings, apparently at Montezuma Wildlife Refuge. Marsh Hawk: one Mil-Port Jun. 10, the only one. Osprey: Aug. 23 Emmons, near Oneonta, the first fall migrant; two others before month end. American Kestrel: (13,6). Ruffed Grouse: (2,1). Ring-necked Pheasant: (2,2); only three other reports. Turkey: (1,1). Oxford BBS. Killdeer: (48,6). Common Snipe: one Sherburne Jul. 21 and one South Otselec Aug. 6 (R, SW). Spotted Sandpiper: (4,4); one Mil-Port Jul. 29, walking on lily pads; comparatively scarce. Solitary Sandpiper: three South Otselec Aug. 6. Greater Yellowlegs: three South Otselec Aug. 6. Lesser Yellowlegs: one South Otselec July 30. Pectoral Sandpiper: four South Otselec Aug. 6 (R, SW). Least Sandpiper: one South Otselec Aug. 6. Semipalmated Sandpiper: two South Otselec Aug. 6. **NORTHERN PHALAROPE:** one Candor Aug. 31 and again Sept. 1 (DW, E, BM), rarely reported in Region. Herring Gull: Aug. 4 Chenango Forks (A, MD), rarely recorded in the summer here.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Rock Dove: (59,6). Mourning Dove: (67,7). Yellow-billed Cuckoo: (2,1); heard regularly at Chenango Forks until Jun. 17 but only two other reports. Black-billed Cuckoo: (4,3); also Jun. 1 at Choconut Center and two reports from Owego. Screech Owl: none at all, spring or summer. Horned Owl: three reports, all from Binghamton area; down considerably. Whip-poor-will: Jun. 3 Choconut Center (MS), calling from the patio right outside a window; the only one so far this year. Chimney Swift: (28,5). Ruby-throated Hummingbird: (1,1); quite a few other reports. Belted Kingfisher: (3,2). Common Flicker: (20,7). Pileated Woodpecker: (3,3); five other reports. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Sherburne Jul. 1 (R, SW); also an undated report from Owego. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (3,3); Aug. 21 and 23 Mil-Port, the only other summer reports. Hairy Woodpecker: (1,1). Downy Woodpecker: (4,4).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Eastern Kingbird: (22,7); common along rural roads all season. Great Crested Flycatcher: (24,6); Eastern Phoebe: (37,7). Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal; three Crumhorn, e. of Oneonta, Aug. 21. Willow Flycatcher: (7,4). Alder Flycatcher: (5,1) McDonough BBS. Least Flycatcher: (38,7). Eastern Wood Pewee: (22,6). Horned Lark: (1,1). Tree Swallow: (54,7). Bank Swallow: (12,1). Rough-winged Swallow: (1,1); only one other report, undated from Owego. Barn Swallow: (165,7). Cliff Swallow: Jun. 17 Port, no others. Blue Jay: (94,7); 39 Mil-Port Aug. 21, 19 at one stop. Common Crow: (234,7). Black-capped Chickadee: (44,7). Tufted Titmouse: (4,2); also reported from Chenango Forks and Choconut Center. White-breasted Nuthatch: (2,2). Red-breasted Nuthatch: two Sherburne Jul. 1; Jul. 2 Newark Valley; four and eight Mil-Port Jul. 29 and Aug. 3 respectively. Brown Creeper: (1,1) Oxford BBS; Jul. 2 Newark Valley; two Mil-Port Jul. 29. House Wren: (85,7). Winter Wren: two Mil-Port Aug. 3. Long-billed Marsh Wren: one Port Jul. 7 and again Jul. 18; no reports from Norwich-Sherburne area because of Conrail competition for access path. Short-billed Marsh Wren: two South Edmon-

ston, in Chenango Co., Aug. 3 (R, SW). Mockingbird: (1,1) E. Newark BBS; also at Endwell and Union Center in Jul. Gray Catbird: (95,7). Brown Thrasher: (26,5). Robin: (355,7). Wood Thrush: (102,7). Hermit Thrush: Jul. 2 Newark Valley; Mil-Port Jul. 18 and 29; also at Owego. Swainson's Thrush: one Pharsalia Jun. 16 (R, SW); one banded Aug. 20 Vestal. Veery: (43,7). Eastern Bluebird: (9,3); seven near Oneonta Aug. 19. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: at Chenango Forks to at least Aug. 29 (A, MD). Golden-crowned Kinglet: two Pharsalia Jun. 16 (R, SW). Ruby-crowned Kinglet: five fall migrants Crumhorn, near Oneonta, Aug. 21. Cedar Waxwing: (70,5); small flocks all period. Starling: (450,7).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Yellow-throated Vireo: (10,5); daily at Chenango Forks until Aug. 25. Solitary Vireo: Coventryville BBS; reported in ones and twos all summer from Oneonta area, Newark Valley and Choconut Center; seven Port-Mil Aug. 21 possibly migrants. Red-eyed Vireo: (107,7); one feeding a young cowbird Aug. 12 Emmons. Warbling Vireo: (8,4). Black-and-white Warbler: (4,2); seven Port-Mil Aug. 23. Golden-winged Warbler: (2,1); several other Jun. reports then none until Aug. 19 Chenango Forks. Blue-winged Warbler: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal, the first after several Jun. reports. Tennessee Warbler: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal; four Mil-Port Aug. 21 and two in approximately the same area Aug. 23. Nashville Warbler: (6,3). **NORTHERN PARULA:** one Crumhorn sawmill Jun. 17 (MD, CW, KW), "listened to him for some time but couldn't find him." Yellow Warbler: (156,7); six Mil-Port Aug. 10, the last ones reported within the period. Magnolia Warbler: (4,2); five reports, to Aug. 23, from Mil-Port-Oneonta area. Cape May Warbler: one Mil-Port Aug. 21, no others. Black-throated Blue Warbler: (1,1) Lisle BBS; no Jul. reports, then six reported Aug. 19 to 23 in Mil-Port-Oneonta area. Yellow-rumped Warbler: (1,1) Coventryville BBS; one other Jun. report, four Jul. reports and five Aug. reports—six Mil-Port Aug. 21 max; summer reports in the Region were almost non-existent 20 years ago, but the frequency has been gradually creeping up in recent years. Black-throated Green Warbler: (8,2); small numbers all summer, as usual; 15 Mil-Port Aug. 21. Blackburnian Warbler: (1,1) McDonough BBS; three Pharsalia Jun. 16; also reported from Newark Valley and Mil-Port. Chestnut-sided Warbler: (36,7); 20 Mil-Port Aug. 21. Bay-breasted Warbler: two Emmons Aug. 19, first ones since May; other reports Aug. 21 and 23. Prairie Warbler: Jun. 11, 17 and 25 Choconut Center. Ovenbird: (43,6). Northern Waterthrush: (5,3). Louisiana Waterthrush: Jun. 10 Mil-Port; Jun. 14 Apalachin. Mourning Warbler: (2,1) McDonough BBS; Jun. 10 and Aug. 21 Port-Mil. Yellowthroat: (216,7). Yellow-breasted Chat: still at Choconut Center Jun. 6, 18 and 24 and singing vigorously. Wilson's Warbler: one banded Aug. 20 Vestal. Canada Warbler: (2,2); one other early Jun. report then none until Jul. 29 Port-Mil. American Redstart: (18,4).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: House Sparrow: (206,6). Bobolink: (126,7); Choconut Center Aug. 27. Eastern Meadowlark: (55,7). Red-winged Blackbird: (840,7). Northern Oriole: (104,7). Common Grackle: (182,7); Brown-headed Cowbird: (41,7). Scarlet Tanager: (32,7). Cardinal: (63,6). Rose-breasted Grosbeak: (33,7). Indigo Bunting: (48,7). Purple Finch: (12,5). House Finch: (2,1). E. Newark BBS; Jun. 19 Oneonta, "on clothesline pulling frayed end of line"; also at Endwell, Choconut Center and Owego. Am. Goldfinch: (67,7). Rufous-sided Towhee: (46,7). Savannah Sparrow: (38,7). Grasshopper Sparrow: (1,1) Lisle BBS; Jun. 11 and 18, two different places in Castle Creek area (MS); one undated Owego report; no others. Henslow's Sparrow: (1,1) Coventryville BBS; that's all. Vesper Sparrow: one Port-Mil Jun. 10; Aug. 26 at Cole Park in Broome Co.; two undated Owego area records; no others. Dark-eyed Junco: (5,2); seven reports of up to seven birds throughout the period from Port-Mil, Pharsalia and Newark Valley. Chipping Sparrow: (125,7). **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** (1,1) Oxford BBS. Field Sparrow: (70,7). White-throated Sparrow: (13,4); six Pharsalia Jun. 16; six reports throughout period from Port-Mil, four max Jun. 10. Swamp Sparrow: (12,4). Song Sparrow: (302,7).

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