

REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

W. E. BENNING

The summer was dry until the heavy rains of late July, and rather wet after that. Temperatures advanced from below normal in June to above in August, giving an average normal temperature for the season. However, daily temperatures went from hot to cold like a yo-yo. Mid-July was very hot and mid-August had some very cool days with a record low of 39 degrees at Ithaca on August 19.

Reports from Elmira include an Arctic Loon for the third time in four years. The first fall warblers hit there July 28 including Black-and-white, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Common Yellowthroat and Wilson's. The first TV tower kill of *Empidonax* sp. occurred August 20. On August 27 thru 28 more than 100 birds of 14 species were killed. They were mostly warblers, but included five Yellow-bellied Flycatchers.

With water levels held high at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, the often fantastic shorebirding, which can occur there when large mudflats are exposed, did not take place this summer. There was a small mudflat area exposed for a few days just as the fall shorebird movement started and Lesser Yellowlegs and Least Sandpipers appeared right on schedule on June 29, followed by a Ruff on July 2. After the late July rains, some shorebirds appeared at the Waterloo dump, including Killdeer, both yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitcher and Spotted, Pectoral, Least, Stilt and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The Ithaca airport pond also hosted some shorebirds including Semipalmated Plover, Common Snipe, Lesser Yellowlegs and Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral and Least Sandpipers.

The eagle hacking program at Montezuma Refuge was continued for the fourth year with four young Bald Eagles raised. Some of the birds fledged there in prior years have returned and have been seen flying in the area.

Among the encouraging aspects of the past season was the continued nesting of Goshawks, Cooper's and Red-shouldered Hawks near Ithaca. There were increased reports of both cuckoos and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. While still too early to get real excited about it, there seems to be a bit of improvement in the status of the beleaguered Vesper Sparrow.

The top ornithological story of the summer has to be the incursion of several southern species into the Region, especially the Ithaca area, and the nesting or attempted nesting by several of them. An Alder Flycatcher was found feeding three young in a nest at Cayuta Lake outlet in Schuyler County. This would appear to be the first nesting of the species in the Region since Dr. A. A. Allen photographed a nest in Taughannock State Park during the 1940's. The Fish Crows, after visiting Ithaca annually for five years, built a nest, as reported in the last issue of *The Kingbird*, but no young were seen. Also in Ithaca a pair of White-eyed Vireos were heard calling daily and observed carrying food but no nest was found. The actions of a pair of Kentucky Warblers plus the presence of a nearby fledgling would certainly indicate nesting near Brooktondale. A Hooded Warbler's nest was located in Arnot Forest. All in all it was an exciting summer for Ithaca area birders.

Rarities: White Pelican, Ruff, Acadian Flycatcher, Fish Crow, White-eyed Vireo, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler and Orchard Oriole.

Abbreviations: BBS—U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey (Trumansburg June 3, Orleans June 9); MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; RBC—Resident Bird Census (Geneva June 10, Ithaca June 16), * (starred)—details on file.

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LOONS—DUCKS: Com. Loon: one spent the summer at Keuka L. **WHITE PELICAN:** the bird which appeared at MNWR last April stayed until mid-Aug. deep in the marsh where it was visible only to the Refuge personnel going about their work. Double-crested Cormorant: up to two immatures were seen at MNWR during the latter half of the summer. Great Blue Heron: a small heronry was found near Dundee. Great Egret: single bird at MNWR during Aug. Least Bittern: one MNWR Aug. 8. Canada Goose: an estimated 600 summered at MNWR. Snow Goose: an injured blue phase bird remained at MNWR well into July. Egyptian Goose: two escaped birds at MNWR June 2. Maximum duck numbers at MNWR were as follows:

Mallard	4,500	Green-winged Teal	200	Northern Shoveler	50
Black	200	Blue-winged Teal	400	Wood Duck	1,400
Gadwall	250	Am. Wigeon	50	Hooded Merganser	50
Pintail	75				

Hooded Mergansers nested in a Wood Duck house at Wellsburg.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Goshawk: of the three known active nests in Tompkins Co. two were successful. On June 6 two young were banded south of Brooktondale. A nest SE of Ithaca fledged young. There were three sightings on the Ithaca RBC and one at S. Danby July 17. Cooper's Hawk: reported from MNWR and four locations around Ithaca. A nest at Cayuga Heights had downy chicks June 13, 17 and 20 but on the 24th the undamaged nest was empty. Red-shouldered Hawk: a pair nested at Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary, Ithaca. Broad-winged Hawk: one Ithaca RBC. Bald Eagle: one Brooktondale July 3 (P. Drake). Osprey: two MNWR from mid-July on. Ruffed Grouse: on the upswing in the Ithaca area. Ring-necked Pheasant: the Orleans BBS listed 12. All other reports were zero to five. Am. Coot: max 500 MNWR. Upland Sandpiper: 20 at Horseheads June 3 (WH) and one on the Ithaca RBC. RUFF: one MNWR July 2 (WEB). The usual hundreds (up to 1,500) of Ring-billed Gulls, with a few Herring Gulls thrown in, frequented the Waterloo Dump. Caspian Tern: two Watkins Glen Aug. 16. Black Tern: 200 to 300 MNWR.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Yellow-billed Cuckoo: four Orleans BBS; two Geneva RBC; one Reeder's Creek, Sen. Co. June 23; one Tyre Aug. 23. Black-billed Cuckoo: widely reported from around the Region with a high of 14 on the Orleans BBS. Screech Owl: two young out of the nest Ithaca June 19. Barred Owl: one on the Ithaca RBC and one heard on Connecticut Hill, Ithaca July 24. Short-eared Owl: one Geneva RBC. Whip-poor-will: one Ithaca June 23, only report. Com. Nighthawk: one on the Ithaca RBC and singles at Geneva Aug. 17 and Reeder's Creek Aug. 25 and 31. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: two or three young at Etna June 7 (Sally Spofford).

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: several reported around Elmira. **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER:** one seen at Cayuta Lake outlet May 19 (B. Strath). Seen again on June 14. On July 13 it was feeding three young in a nest. Last seen July 28 (JB). Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Ithaca Aug. 25; one Elmira Aug. 27 thru 30. Bank Swallow: a colony in Tyre Township, Seneca Co., which was destroyed last year by additional excavation, was reestablished this year. Rough-winged Swallow: very few reports. Cliff Swallow: reported from Penn Yan only. Purple Martin: good colonies at MNWR. **FISH CROW:** the Ithaca pair was present throughout the period but there was no sign of young at the nest

which they built in May. Red-breasted Nuthatch: at least four present at Watkins Glen during June with one pair apparently nesting. Winter Wren: a singing male at Ithaca thru June; two reports of a bird carrying moss at Slaterville Wildflower Preserve but no nest was found; a bird singing at Cayuta L outlet July 13. Carolina Wren: one Ithaca RBC; one Montour Falls Aug. 1. Mockingbird: a nest with three young found in Seneca Co. E. Bluebird: nested at Ithaca and Trumansburg; two reports of a group on Harris Hill, Elmira. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: numerous reports especially from MNWR and the Elmira area.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: WHITE-EYED VIREO: a pair called daily at Crescent Place, Ithaca to Aug. 14 and continued to be present to the end of the period. The birds were observed carrying food but no nest was found or young observed (Dan Gray). Yellow-throated Vireo: four Ithaca RBC. Solitary Vireo: one Connecticut Hill, Ithaca, July 24. Red-eyed Vireo: 33 Ithaca RBC. Philadelphia Vireo: one was seen, heard singing and the song was taped at Buttermilk Falls June 14 and 15. Warbling Vireo: 11 Ithaca RBC. Warblers: Prothonotary: one east of Ithaca along Fall Creek July 13 (Ericksen); one heard Ontario Co. June 9 (R. Spahn). Golden-winged: in the Ithaca area the resident males dropped from eight last year to three this year. Blue-winged: 15 resident males in the Ithaca area. "Lawrence's" Warbler: three resident males at Ithaca. "Brewster's" Warbler: five resident males at Ithaca. Prairie: six to ten singing males near Montour Falls (JB). Northern Waterthrush: four Ithaca RBC; one MNWR July 31. Louisiana Waterthrush: nest with four young at Slaterville Wildflower Preserve during June. At least two young were fledged; observed feeding young for several days in July on West Bluff Road, Yates Co.; one at Clyde Aug. 3. **KENTUCKY:** a pair was discovered carrying food on Hammond Hill Road, Brooktondale, on June 23. The pair was seen daily thru June 27 carrying food and were much agitated when observers were around. On the 27th a fledgling was seen in the bushes with the adults nearby carrying food but actual feeding of the young bird was not observed (J & K Confer, W & S Spofford, DM)*. Mourning: seen and heard singing near Dryden June 5, 12 and 13; in the Ithaca area JC located twelve birds in two hours including three females with young. **HOODED:** seven males were seen in four locations in Tompkins Co. (DM, JC); a nest was located in Arnot Forest (C. Smith).

WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Bobolink: up to 20 in a hayfield along E. Lake Road, Seneca Co. E. Meadowlark: reported down by most observers. **ORCHARD ORIOLE:** first year male Ithaca June 11 (M. Shepherd); immature at Reeder's Creek, Seneca Co. in the same area where one was observed last year (BK). House Finch: continues to increase. ML caught and banded 40 at his feeders at Penn Yan on June 16. Grasshopper Sparrow: apparently had good nesting success at Horseheads as many immatures were noted Aug. 14 (WH). Henslow's Sparrow: three heard near Orleans, Ontario Co. June 9 (R. Spahn). Vesper Sparrow: this now rare species may be a bit more plentiful. The Orleans BBS yielded 15 and the Geneva RBC 16. Ithaca had two resident males and a bird was seen in Seneca Co. Dark-eyed Junco: young out of the nest were seen at Ringwood June 9 (Sally Spofford). White-throated Sparrow: two resident males at Ithaca.

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REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

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June was a little on the cool side with about normal precipitation until the latter part of the month, when a dry spell started that lasted past mid-July.