

BBS (H) and four on Abbs. Worth the bone-wrenching hours on rough ground, the annoyance of insect hordes, and dangers from hornets and bears is the return, after several years, of a **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** to the Alfred area 23 June where it was seen irregularly through 15 July (EB); *another* was identified in Andover Twp. 10 July (EB, Chapman). A White-throated Sparrow nest was discovered 1.5 ft. up in goldenrod near Alfred 3 July; the roadside nest was abandoned when "a bus-load of kids . . . had bus trouble" nearby (EB); other summer White-throats are one on BBS, three on Abbs and one to four birds found in at least six widespread areas.

When it's all together—what a summer! Thanks to the Faithful.

Amity Lake, Belmont, New York 14813

REGION 2 — GENESEE

ROBERT SPAHN

This was a quiet summer. There were few rarities to send the birding hordes flocking afield. Breeding bird surveys were typically just average runs. Many workers were afield atlasing, but the data will not be returned and analyzed in any detail until much later. As July and August wore on, shorebird habitat remained poor and the start of warbler migration was only barely evident. The receipt of field trip reports was at its lowest ebb in many years. 206 species were reported in the Region for the season.

Summer weather brought few extremes relative to the past several years. Rainfall in late July and August was well above normal and brought the year's total to very nearly average. June saw temperatures closely match long-term averages and rainfall reach 2.70" (6.9 cm.), very near the normal of 2.99" (7.6 cm.). July too averaged very near normal temperatures with the first half hot, the latter half cool. In this case, rainfall at 4.60" (11.7 cm.) was 50% above the normal of 3.09" (7.8 cm.). In August, the first half highs and lows tracked the long-term average closely. This was followed by a sunny, cool taste of fall, then an extended warm, dreary stretch of clouds, rain, and S-SE winds. Rainfall at 4.44" (11.3 cm.) was nearly double normal.

Among the general field observations we find there were few straggling spring migrants in June, early fall passerines were few and relatively late, neither gulls nor terns were present in expected numbers, very few diving ducks summered in comparison with the past several years, observers still ignore rails and owls, and shorebirding prospects remain dim with little available habitat and more being tilled and drained annually. Specific positives include: Least Bittern numbers up, Turkey Vulture nesting confirmed in Letchworth Park, a minor rebound for Ring-necked Pheasant, increased Red Knot sightings, Acadian Flycatcher still nesting in Bergen Swamp, huge Bank Swallow gatherings in late July, continued periodic sightings of Common Raven, Winter Wren and Short-billed Marsh Wren breeding, a multitude of confirmed, successful Mockingbird nesting pairs, two confirmed Loggerhead Shrike nestings, good variety in breeding warblers (24 species), Western Meadowlark on territory all summer, spreading and numerically

booming House Finch, breeding Pine Siskin, and continued active Henslow's Sparrow colonies. Negatives include: very poor numbers for Pied-billed Grebe, Black-crowned Night Heron, and Am. Bittern; no August gathering of Forster's or Common Terns of any note; few Com. Nighthawk or Whip-poor-will reports; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Yellow-throated Vireo missing from several traditional breeding areas; Golden-winged Warbler numbers continuing to dwindle relative to Blue-winged; and Grasshopper and Vesper sparrows scarce.

By the time of the final typing of this report, 56 atlas work sheets had been returned for the Region with nine possible, 37 probable, and 109 confirmed species reported. Roughly three to four times this number of reports is expected for the year.

Rarities: Long-billed Dowitcher, Franklin's Gull, Black-headed Gull, Acadian Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, Western Meadowlark, and White-crowned Sparrow.

Abbreviations: BB—Braddock Bay State Park; HHSP—Harriet Hollister Spencer Memorial State Park, Livingston Co.; IC—Island Cottage Woods, Greece; OB—Ontario Beach Park, Rochester; PB—Pt. Breeze, Orleans Co.; and WL—general west lakeshore area.

OBSERVERS: Michael Bacon, Burroughs Audubon Nature Club, Chris Bennem, Walter Benning, Nancy Boudrie, Carolyn Cass, Julie Claffey, Anne Clarridge, Jack & Joyce Connor, Mike Davids, Dan Davis, Gertrude Davis, Frank & Bob Dobson, Kay Doris, June Feder, John & Arleen Foster, Genesee Ornithological Society, Harold Griffen, Kevin Griffith, Bob & Sandra Hazen, Norm Henderson, Alan & Joan Hurst, Qivind Jensen, Herb & Polly Keating, Allen & Bea Kemnitzer, Ray Ladwig, Walter Listman, Warren Lloyd, Hayward Madden, Robert McKinney, Ann Miranian, Laura & Neil Moon, Richard O'Hara, Bernie Olin, P.O.S., Neil Powell, Pat Reister, Rochester Birding Association, Marge Schmale, Jeanne & Sharon Skelly, Robert & Susan Spahn, Ann Stear, Alison Stewart, Harriet Stride, Mary Ann Sunderlin, William Symonds, Joe Taylor, Steve Taylor, Tom, Mike, & Dave Tetlow, Bill & Marion Thompson, Jim Tucker, Eleanor Weld, Paul Weld, Munro Will, and Alice Wood.

LOONS—DUCKS: The only loons of the season were: Com. Loon: one BB 8-11 June; one Honeoye Lake 6 June; two Hemlock Lake 11 Aug.; and one WL 25, 31 Aug. Pied-billed Grebe was rarely reported, in spite of atlas activity. Double-crested Cormorant was seen in small numbers in the BB area thru the season with max 24 Carlton 6 Aug. Breeding populations of Great Blue and Green Herons were in good shape. Vagrant southern herons were virtually nonexistent, represented only by Great Egret: one-two Hamlin 11-16 Aug. Black-crowned Night Heron and Am. Bittern numbers were low, though good numbers of night heron immatures started appearing late in the season. A good Least Bittern count was: 15 Buck Pond 28 July (MD). Puddle ducks provided no surprises with local breeders enjoying good success and only Pintail, Am. Wigeon, and Green-winged Teal among the less common summer residents present. Among the divers only Oldsquaw: one WL 16 July (MD, PR); and Red-breasted Merganser: one female BB June were recorded, both rare in summer.

HAWKS—ALCIDS: Field trips and atlas work uncovered nests of all three accipiters. Goshawk: one adult, two young on nest HHSP thru, was photographed. Bald Eagle records included many sightings of members of the Hemlock Lake family plus one imm. WL 7 June. A late Osprey was at BB 24 June. The usual fall migration of hawks along the lakeshore was reported in Aug., again mainly imm. Red-tailed Hawks. Daily numbers ranged from 27 to 171, typically over relatively short time spans—1½-2 hours. Bobwhite: one Livonia 7 Aug. (MW, HM), must be recorded as a probable release/escape. Rails were poorly reported. Ring-necked Pheasant increased a bit, while Turkey popped up across the Region. Shorebirding suffered from poor habitat. June saw virtually no records representing a continued northward migration. July and August brought many good records, under the circumstances, with the few good areas well covered. Among the best were: Whimbrel: one OB 24 July;

one IC 10 Aug.; and one BB 23 Aug.; Wilson's Phalarope: one PB 22, 28 July; and one Hamlin 15 Aug.; **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER**: one Carlton 14 July (MD, WLi); and one Webster 26 July (WLi, MAS), both early; Red Knot: one OB 25 July (MD, KG, mob), very early; and max 7 OB 28 Aug; Baird's Sandpiper: three to five Hemlock L. 16-26 Aug.; and Buff-breasted Sandpiper: one OB 28 Aug. Twenty-five shorebird species were tallied thru the season. Gulls and terns never really reached expected numbers as the summer progressed. The most interesting records were: Great Black-backed Gull: 25 WL 12 June, late for so many; **FRANKLIN'S GULL**: one OB 25 Aug. (KG, RP); **BLACK-HEADED GULL**: one Irondequoit Bay 29 July (MD, WS); and Caspian Tern: 38 BB 31 July; and 40 WL 13 Aug. peak counts.

PIGEONS—WOODPECKERS: Mourning Doves were everywhere. Cuckoos were both far reduced from last year's high numbers. Owls were very poorly reported except by atlas workers who reported Barn, Barred, Long-eared, and Saw-whet as rarer possible or probable breeders among the reports received to date. Whip-poor-will was recorded in several atlas blocks. Com. Nighthawk, while apparently scarce in the Region, was noted in migration at peaks: 20 Rochester 29 Aug.; and 77 Brighton 30 Aug. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was reported from several locations as a probable breeder. Other species in this group received too little detailed attention to reveal meaningful trends.

FLYCATCHERS—STARLINGS: The flycatchers added to the list of species with no migrants straggling into June. E. Kingbirds seemed particularly numerous this summer. **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER** bred again in Bergen Swamp and appeared briefly in one other atlas block near Scottsville. Olive-sided Flycatcher singles were recorded in IC and Durand-Eastman Park 1, 15, 25, and 31 Aug., a typical number of fall records. There was no obvious trend in numbers of the other flycatchers present. Swallows followed typical patterns: Tree, Rough-winged, and Barn Swallows started flocking in late Aug.; Bank Swallow peaked in late July; max 5000+ BB 24-31 Aug., including one striking albino bird 31 Aug.; and Cliff Swallow bred in several localities. **COMMON RAVEN**: one Hilton 18 July (MD, PR, R & SH), continues the string of regional sightings. Among the wrens, Winter Wren was recorded as a probable breeder in July in Bergen Swamp; Carolina Wren was very scarce; and Short-billed Marsh Wren breeding was confirmed at Hogan Pt. near BB with one to five birds present to 16 Aug., including young. Mockingbirds popped up all over between Webster and Sodus Pt., with 14, including four pairs feeding a single young, each recorded on 21 June (WLi). In the hills above Honeoye Lake, at HHSP, Hermit Thrush was heard singing thru 24 July and Swainson's Thrush was reported 14 June. Increases in E. Bluebird were reported from several parts of the Region. An early Ruby-crowned Kinglet appeared in Greece 31 Aug. Cedar Waxwing was particularly evident all season. Loggerhead Shirke was confirmed breeding in two locations: a pair fledged two young on the Wayne/Monroe Co. Line Rd. 28 June (WLi, mob, photos); and a pair fledged two young, one of which was killed by a car, in Carlton near Pt. Breeze thru 31 July (MD, WLi, mob).

VIREOS—WARBLERS: In this grouping there were few spring stragglers and fall migrants were generally late and few in number thru season's end. Among the vireos, all were recorded except White-eyed. Yellow-throated was absent from several traditional nesting locales and Philadelphia was recorded only as an early June and late Aug. migrant. Warblers were represented by 28 species with 24 potentially breeding, mainly in the higher country south of Rochester. Among the more interesting warbler reports are: a scarcity of Golden-winged, particularly relative to Blue-winged; No. Parula resident in Letchworth Park; Black-throated Blue as a probable breeder at HHSP; Cerulean missing from several locations; Bay-breasted: one BB 30 July, early; **PRAIRIE**: probably breeding again near Canadice, far removed from the road this year; Yellow-breasted Chat scarce except in Letchworth Park; Hooded particularly abundant; Wilson's: one Canadice Lake 15 June (JTa, JTU), very late; and Am. Redstart, abundant.

WEAVERS—SPARROWS: Bobolink breeding was apparently highly successful. The PB

WESTERN MEADOWLARK was singing on territory thru the end of July, though no better evidence of breeding was obtained. Orchard Oriole fledged young at PB (four imm. 4 Aug.) and Webster (two young July). Rusty Blackbird: one BB 28 Aug. was early. Probable breeding of Evening Grosbeak was reported from several high country atlas blocks. House Finch is expanding all through the Region. There is much probable evidence of breeding among the Pine Siskins left from the huge spring flight, though only one confirmed record to date. Examples include: Pine Siskin: two to 14 Greece thru 31 July; two Honeoye Lake 14 June; one to two Webster, Greece, Irondequoit, Livonia June-July. Among the grassland sparrows, Grasshopper and Vesper were scarce, Henslow's locally in good shape, and Savannah abundant. Dark-eyed Junco: one Hilton 5, 19, 25 July, was unusual for the lakeplain in summer. **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW**: one BB 5 July (MD), was a very rare summer occurrence.

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REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

W. E. BENNING

Temperatures this summer averaged about normal with the hottest spells, 85°-90° F., at mid-month in June and July. As often happens in the summertime, rainfall varied from place to place. Most of the Region was a bit on the dry side.

For the second year, and with increased interest and intensity, the Breeding Bird Atlas project took over activities of the Region's birders. The fruit and nut crop of the season varies considerably with the species and the locality. Mountain ash berries are abundant with nuts and wild grapes scarce and other species average.

Because extensive mudflats are no longer available at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge through the fall migration period (1 July until freezeup), shorebirding in Region 3 is drastically different. Formerly the statistics from Montezuma, because of the sheer number of species and individuals found there, tended to dominate the Region 3 shorebird report. Now we have only reports from small ponds and marshes. This year most of the common, but very few of the less common species, have been reported.

An interesting observation comes from Elmira where a pair of Cedar Waxwings was observed building a nest in a cottonwood tree on 5 June, a very early date for that species. Later the same observer returned to the site and found two Eastern Kingbirds working on the nest and the female eventually sitting on it.

Seasonal positives: 1) more reports of nesting accipiters. Are there really more or is the increased atlas activity just finding more?; 2) the successful nesting of the Osprey at MNWR for the second year; 3) continued spread of the Turkey; 4) more widespread reports of Upland Sandpipers—again, atlas activity?; 5) both Am. Coot and Black Tern bred in good numbers at MNWR; 6) an excellent E. Kingbird migration; 7) continued and more widespread sightings of Com. Raven in the Region's southern hills; 8) the continued presence and nesting of the Fish Crow at Ithaca; 9) Carolina Wren numbers picking up; 10) a really en-