

REGION 1 – NIAGARA FRONTIER

STEPHEN W. EATON

The first ten days of June continued the warm, dry weather of April and May. The middle of the month, from 11 to 21 June, was wet and cool. Average temperatures ranged from 51 to 67 degrees and precipitation totaled about 3.2 inches. The last third of the month was drier and warmer, and Lake Erie reached 62 degrees by the end of the month. A low temperature for the month came on the 4th with 35° at Jamestown and 44° at Buffalo International Airport.

July continued the drought but stayed pleasantly cool. Average temperature for the month, 69.7 degrees, was one below normal and precipitation was more than an inch below normal, 1.81 inches at Buffalo, but 4.13 inches at Jamestown.

August continued sunny with high temperatures in the 70's and 80's but pleasantly cool at night. Only one low temperature exceeded 70 degrees. An upper Great Lakes pressure system maintained this fine weather until the 20th, when the weather cooled slightly. The last week brought 3-4 inches of rain, ending a drought that browned lawns and parched crops in many parts of the Region. Lake Erie's temperature peaked during mid-month at 71 degrees and started cooling on the 22nd.

The birds of the wetlands are still in trouble in the Region. There was only one report of American Bittern, but Least Bittern was found in at least four swamps on the lake plain. Great Egrets appeared in July and August, again mostly in swamps on the lake plain. At Burgeson Sanctuary a fourth nesting record in Chautauqua Co. for Green-winged Teal was confirmed. At Times Beach, Buffalo, five American Wigeons produced 30 young and Common Mergansers were seen in June and July in Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany Counties. Two Black Terns at Burgeson Sanctuary were the only reports for the period.

At the Allegheny Reservoir Mary and John Forness and Tom Jurzcak released seven young Ospreys, which make a total of 25 hacked in the past five years. DEC plans to continue hacking through 1987, when a total of 37 birds will have been released. The Fornesses reported that Osprey #X06 returned this year, without a mate, but built a more substantial nest. Three Bald Eagles frequently were seen here as well.

In southern Cattaraugus Co., the Gypsy Moth hit with a vengeance this year, defoliating the oaks, hawthorne and aspens. This left a large area without mast or berries. By 30 June most of the moths had pupated and the rain of droppings was much slowed. This infestation concentrated cuckoos in southern Cattaraugus Co. North and west of the infestation in Chautauqua Co. the fruit crop, particularly hawthorne, was fair to good. By mid-August the oaks, and other defoliated trees, had put forth new leaves. Many of the moths failed to emerge and we hope that their population will crash.

Southern species seem to keep increasing. Orchard Orioles were found nesting on the Allegheny Plateau in several areas. A White-eyed Vireo possibly nested

near Dunkirk. A male Yellow-throated Warbler returned to Allegany State Park but no nest was found.

Some carduline finches, which feed on the seeds of conifers and nest when and where these happen to be abundant, were reported but not as nesters. Red Crossbills, which eat spruce seed, and Pine Siskins and goldfinches, which eat hemlock and birch seed, seemed to be attracted to the abundant cone supply and perhaps nested.

Walter Klabunde summarized the 18 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Surveys from the Region. Of the 118 species counted, 45 were reported in higher numbers than normal, 51 in about average numbers and 22 in lower than normal numbers. Lowest numbers were reported for Red-shouldered Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Belted Kingfisher, Brown Thrasher, Canada Warbler, Rufous-sided Towhee, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, and Northern Oriole.

Rarities: Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Willet, Franklin's Gull, "Lawrence's" Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler.

Abbreviations: Alle-Allegany; BC-Bird Club; BBS-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Breeding Bird Survey; Catt-Cattaraugus; Chau-Chautauqua; NP-Nature Preserve; NWR-National Wildlife Refuge; WMA-Wildlife Management Area; WP-Wildlife Preserve.

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LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: three in Basic plumage Pt. Stockholm, Chau Co 30 June (PJ, JW) one Chau Lake off Colburns 18 Aug (W & LO); one Alle Res near Onoville 26 Aug (DG). Pied-billed Grebe: one Farmersville Sta 20 Aug (D & JC) and two Tiffit Farm NP 18 Aug (WD) were only reports of grebes. Am. Bittern: one Tonawanda WMA 15 June (WD, BP). Least Bittern: one Iroquois NWR 5 July (DE); one Tiffit Farm NP 12 July (PH), five 13, 18 July (WD, BP), two Alabama Twn 8 Aug (DE), three (2 ad, 1 imm) Oak Orchard WMA 9 Aug (GO). Great Egret: one Tonawanda WMA 6 July (DC) first of several in swamps of lake plain through Aug; one Twn Ripley, Chau Co 19, 25 and 26 July (P & VB); one Alle Res Aug (TJ). **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON**: one South Park, Buffalo 4 Aug (RA). Canada Goose: 13-60 Farmersville Sta. June, July, Aug (D & JC), local nesters continue to increase. Wood Duck: continues as successful breeder. Green-winged Teal: female with five young Burgeson Swamp 28 June, a fourth nesting Chau Co. N. Pintail and Gadwall: Tonawanda WMA in June (WD, BP). Am. Wigeon: four ad, three-five imm Times Beach, Buffalo, 24 June, five females and 30 imm 28 July and seen to end of Aug (RA). Com. Merganser: 10, 11 and two Amity Lake 2, 3, 8 June (VP, Adams); three Quaker Run and Lake ASP 5 July (TB); two females Chau Creek near Barcelona Harbor, Chau Co, 27 July (RgS); two Salamanca 10 Aug and 10+ on 14 Aug (TB), possible fledged brood. Red-breasted Merganser: female Barcelona 28 Aug (RS).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: 12 on 18 BBS routes, higher than average. Osprey: see intro.; one Iroquois NWR 16 Aug (DE), first migrant; one Amity Lake 19 Aug (VP);

one Tift Farm NP 31 Aug (RA, JG). Bald Eagle: imm Burgeson Swamp 13 June (DD); two Iroquois NWR 4 Aug (DE); three (1 ad, 2 subad) Alle Res through most of period (TJ). N. Harrier: reported from Tonawanda WMA, Tift Farm NP, Pomfret Twn, Chaut Co and Clarksville, Alle Co, during period. N. Goshawk: one Cold Spring, Catt Co June (DD); one nesting near Weathersfield, Wyoming Co. (TJ); two imm banded by Earl Schriver Alle Co, another nest with four infertile eggs (L & DB). Red-shouldered Hawk: still in low numbers. Broad-winged Hawk: of four nests located near Scio, Alle Co, only one successful (VP). Red-tailed Hawk: three nests in Alle Co successful (VP). Am. Kestrel: 23 seen on 18 BBS routes, about average (WK). Wild Turkey: many flocks in southern Catt Co (SE). Killdeer: 165 on 18 BBS counts, an upward trend (WK). Lesser Yellowlegs: two Tonawanda WMA 5 July (WD, BP) ushered in the sandpiper fall migration. **WILLET**: one Dunkirk Harbor 7 Aug (TM), inland record assumed to be western subsp. Stilt Sandpiper: four Goat Island, Niagara R, 24 July (WD, BP) was first Regional record for year. Am. Woodcock: The Fish and Wildlife Service has reduced the daily bag to three and the season to 45 days in the northeast; their "peent" counts still down. **FRANKLIN'S GULL**: one LaSalle Park, Buffalo, 21 Aug (RA, MF), Buffalo, 31 Aug (RA, JG). Caspian Tern: two Burgeson Swamp 28 June (DD); two Times Beach 3 Aug (RA); one Tift Farm NP 18 Aug (WD); Barcelona and Dunkirk Harbors Aug (RS). Black Tern: two Burgeson Swamp 12 June (DD) only report for period.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: 100+ on powerline Farmersville, Catt Co (D & JC), still increasing with increase in corn fields. Many Black-billed and fewer Yellow-billed Cuckoos Catt Co where Gypsy Moth abundant (SE, TB). N. Saw-whet Owl: two Charlotte Twn 1 and 7 June (FR, AS); one Alfred Twn 26 June (EB). Com. Nighthawk: 17 Buffalo 8 Aug (PH), considered first fall migrant by BOS; 102 Tonawanda Twn, Erie Co, 21 & 24 Aug (PH); 850± Jamestown 29 Aug (DG). Red-headed Woodpecker: one Pt. Gratiot 8 June (AS); one Amity Twn 11 June (VP); one Delaware Park, Buffalo, 30 June (PH); two Tonawanda WMA 13 July (DE); four Burgeson Swamp 26 Aug (DD). Red-bellied Woodpecker: one Scio Twn, Alle Co, 8 June (VP); one Springville, Erie Co, 11 June (GO); two Iroquois NWR 27 July (DE).

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Alle SP 8 June (DD *et al.*), late. Acadian Flycatcher: five Wheeler Gulf, Pomfret Twn, 7 June (AS, TM); two Canadaway Creek NS 8 June (AS); one Mayville 6 July (DD). Least Flycatcher: 71 on 18 BBS counts, heard on all routes, highest total ever. E. Kingbird: 76 on 18 BBS counts was above average. Purple Martin: 31 on 18 BBS counts, a median figure. Red-breasted Nuthatch: six on 18 BBS was the highest total ever, and also reported during June and July from Alle, Catt, Chau, and Wyoming Cos; two Tift Farm NP 17 Aug (WD, BP) first of several reports of probable fall migrants; one 12 Aug Amity Twn, Alle Co, (VP), perhaps a local bird. Carolina Wren: one Bourne's Beach 15, 16, 20, 27 July (RgS); one w of Barcelona 4 Aug (RS); one Times Beach 24, 28, 31 Aug (RA *et al.*) only reports; still down from winter '76-'77 and unreported from Allegheny Plateau. E. Bluebird: 25 pairs fledged 128 young on Vivian Pitzrick's Alle Co bluebird trail. There were 41 nestings, 32 successful as opposed to 38 nestings and 23 successful in 1984; three nestings were lost to weather, three to predation and three to House Wrens.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: White-eyed Vireo: two Pomfret Twn, 30 June-20 July (TM, *et al.*), probably nesting; one Old Warren Rd, Frewsburg, Chau Co, 28 & 29 June (KY, JC). Warbling Vireo: 65 on 18 BBS counts more than normal. "Lawrence's" Warbler: one Poland Twn, Chau Co, 14, 21 June (TM, AS). Yellow Warbler: 305 on 18 BBS counts about average (WK). **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER**: singing male Science Lake, Alle SP, 28 June & 2 July (TB) where they nested 1984 (*Kingbird* 34: 220-223). Prothonotary Warbler: one Fredonia College Camp 7 June (TM, AS); one Iroquois NWR 15 June and three (two ad, one fl) 20 July (WD, BP). Ovenbird: 53 on 18 BBS counts, above average. Kentucky Warbler: one Hinsdale Twn, Catt Co, 19 June (RA, RB); one Ivory Twn, Chau Co, 23 & 30 June

(DD, DaG). Yellow-breasted Chat: two Amity Twn, 1 and 4 June (VP); one Pomfret Twn, (T & JM); one near Frewsburg 23 June (RS).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Clay-colored Sparrow: four Pomfret Twn 7, 14, 21 June (AS *et al.*), perhaps the male is no longer lonesome; one Andover Twn, Alle Co, 14, 21 June (EB), a new locality; one West Almond, Alle Co, 26 June (EB, CK *et al.*). Henslow's Sparrow: two Pomfret Twn, 7 June; two-three Arkwright Twn 13 July; one to two Villanova Twn 1 Aug, all Chau Co (T & JM). White-throated Sparrow: five territorial males in three twns, Alle Co in young spruce plantations 4-30 June (EB); one Beaver Meadows WR 16 June (Rycroft). Orchard Oriole: two ad two imm Cold Spring, Catt (DG *et al.*); one Clarksville Twn, Alle Co, 15 June (EB *et al.*); two Hinsdale Twn, male carrying fecal sac 15 June (EB *et al.*); one Java Twn, Wyoming Co, 22 June (RA *et al.*); one Tifft Farm NP 24 Aug (Collins). House Finch: still increasing over Region; Vivian Pitzrick reports three young in nest 23 Aug (27 days later than in Bull, *Birds of N.Y.*); two others with young 6 Aug; 54 on 18 BBS counts, highest ever; 119 banded Farmersville Sta July (D & JC). Red Crossbill: on two BBS routes in June; four seen and heard in three widely separated localities Alle Co in June (EB, KC); four Baker School 17 June (DD), probably nested in Region as elsewhere in State. Pine Siskin: 25 West Hill Rd, Alle Co, 8 June (EB); two HY (hatching year) banded at Farmersville Sta, present at feeders 11 July to 20 Aug (D & JC), another possible breeder. Am. Goldfinch: 475 on 18 BBS, a high count (WK); 69 nestings near Amity Lake, 26 successful and 115 young fledged; first egg 15 July - 7 nests still active 11 Sept, suspects four nests destroyed by mice (VP); another finch perhaps responding to abundant cone crop.

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REGION 2 – GENESEE

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The summer season began with a cold June. The average temperature was 61.7°, a full five degrees below normal. Some unseasonably cold stretches persisted during the month. July showed the same tendency with a below average temperature of 68.8°. This trend continued into August, which had a slightly below normal average of 68.7°. Precipitation totaled only a very low 1.1 inches in August, over two inches below normal. June and July were just barely below the average.

These conditions provided some interesting situations for the season. The early cold may have caused some problems for early nesting insectivorous species. However, the dryness that prevailed afterwards produced excellent nesting conditions for most species. Water levels in the marshes along the lakeshore were lower than in recent years, resulting in very good nesting conditions for marsh nesting birds like rails. In contrast to recent years, there was an adequate supply of shorebird habitat.