

thru. N. Oriole: over 175 birds thru. Purple Finch: over 125 birds thru. House Finch: common thru. Red Crossbill: 25 birds, last Chen 19 June (JL, DM). White-winged Crossbill: about 15 birds, last Chen 19 June (JL, DM). Pine Siskin: about 11 birds, last Chen 19 June (DM, JL). Am. Goldfinch: abundant thru. House Sparrow: abundant thru.

Box 1, H.C. 61, Powderhouse Road, Binghamton, New York 13903

[Editor's note: With this report Harriet Marsi steps down as Region Four editor to assume the Presidency of the Federation. Beginning with the Fall 1985 season, she is replaced by Jay Lehman. Contributors should send their reports to: Dr. Jay Lehman, R.D. 2, Box 68, Norwich, New York 13815.]

REGION 5 – ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

PAUL A. DeBENEDICTIS

The past several reports have noted the similarity between the weather this year and last. This pattern continued through the summer of 1985. June averaged nearly 4.3 degrees below normal, and both July and August were slightly cooler than average. All three months were dry, June being the wettest at only 0.8 inches below normal. There was virtually no rain at all for a six week period from mid-July to late August. At the end of the season total annual precipitation was nearly six inches below normal in Syracuse. The summer also was quite cloudy.

These weather conditions did not seem to interfere with the nesting season. Rain in June frequently inconvenienced planned birding expeditions, but the combination of dryness and coolness kept biting insects to a minimum. July was positively pleasant, when one could bird watch in central New York with neither insect repellant nor cold weather clothing. There seemed to be good numbers of baby birds about by late summer as well, so the dryness apparently had little effect on nesting populations. However, most observers felt that bird song, parent birds feeding young and fledgling birds disappeared sooner than usual. Work on the Breeding Bird Atlas in early August was much less rewarding than in past years.

In this final year of the Breeding Bird Atlas, workers added no less than six species to the list of confirmed Regional nesters. The two crossbills were noted in the previous report. This season Acadian Flycatcher, Carolina and Sedge Wren, and Bay-breasted Warbler were added to the list. All of these are species last proven to nest in the Region at least twenty years ago! The only half-way cooperative Least Bittern disappeared before its nesting status could be ascertained, and at this writing we were still trying for Whip-poor-will. Only these two species kept workers from confirming nesting for every avian species thought to breed in the Region annually.

With attention focused mainly on inadequately covered blocks this year, many other significant nesting records were obtained. One of the more remarkable was the pair of Osprey that spent the summer at Beaver Lake, Onondaga Co. Although a nest was never found, they suddenly appeared with freshly fledged young in early August, giving us a third lowland breeding record only ten km from the site where a pair tried to nest in 1979! Residents of the north shore of Oneida Lake also hinted that a pair was present in the North Bay area, where an unsuccessful nesting occurred in 1983.

Herkimer County was the least well worked part of the Region at the start of the summer. By the end of this summer every block but two had been visited. Workers found Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Common Raven, Bay-breasted Warbler and Lincoln's Sparrow about 10 to 20 km farther south than had been known previously. Hooded Warblers from this area are an addition to the avifauna of the Adirondacks, and may well be colonizing this range just now from their stronghold in the southern Tug Hill Plateau. Mysteries remain. What is the status of the June and early July Blackpoll Warblers in our Region? Do Common Goldeneye and Philadelphia Vireo nest in Herkimer County? Is Spruce Grouse still extant there? Alas, the answers to these questions will have to come another year.

Elsewhere in the Region a new site for Pine Warbler was found in Oswego Co. Golden-winged Warblers still predominate over Blue-winged Warblers in central Oswego Co. near Fulton, and this season nesting finally was confirmed for a black-throated hybrid ("Lawrence's" Warbler) between these two species.

An observation that will require checking in future years is the Double-crested Cormorants on Oneida Lake. An investigation of "possible nests" on the islands at the west end of the lake in early June revealed no nests. Nearly 40 birds, all but two immatures, were present, but none was in breeding condition. Suitable nesting habitat is present and the species may well colonize this area as these young birds mature.

Results from only six breeding bird surveys were reported. No species were consistently very different from their long term averages on any of the surveys. However, everyone felt Winter Wren was markedly down in numbers, and both cuckoos and Brown Thrasher were scarce at least locally. Henslow's Sparrow made its worst showing ever, but Grasshopper Sparrow was widely, though thinly, spread through the Region. Our Prothonotary Warbler site was drained before it could be checked, to allow work on the dam that forms Delta Lake. Red-breasted Nuthatches were more conspicuous in lowland conifer plantations than in many years, but seem to vanish by August. Hooded Warbler continues to increase along the Lake Ontario shore and House Finch populations continue to explode everywhere. Most of the winter finches that nested here last season were gone by mid-June, Red Crossbill being the most persistent species.

The summer season spans both migrations. The last shorebirds and warblers of the spring were fairly easy to identify, but a number of odd June dates for other species, including Caspian Tern and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, were obtained. The fall migration began in early July with the return of the first shorebirds. By mid-month the landbird migration was evident and many arrivals

were recorded in August. Two early Evening Grosbeak reports may foretell an incursion of this species in the coming fall, but other irruptive species were little in evidence at the season's end. In general the quality of both migrations was poor in terms of numbers of birds found, but not quite so bad in terms of diversity.

The only great rarities found were Glossy Ibis, Long-billed Dowitcher and Acadian Flycatcher, while lesser rarities found included Great and Snowy Egret, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Willet, Western Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Little Gull and Orchard Oriole. A total of 204 species (plus two hybrids) was reported, which is a little better than normal.

Contributors: Dorothy Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, John Hanyak, Scott Harris, Gene Huggins, Jeanne Lally, Gary Lee, Robert L. Long, David M. O'Neill, Robert E. Post, Margaret S. Rusk, F. G. Scheider, Betty Starr, Magdalena Stooks.

Abbreviations: arr—arrival; last—last of season; SP—Sandy Pond, Oswego Co.; StMc—Saint Mary's Cemetery, DeWitt, Onon Co.; SVB—Sylvan and Verona Beach, Oneida Co.; Syr—Syracuse.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: last Oneida Lake 1 June. Pied-billed Grebe: arr SP 8 Aug. Great Egret: two Cicero Swamp 31 Aug, one Delta Lake after 25 Aug. Snowy Egret: one Oneida Lake 25-26 Aug. Black-crowned Night-Heron: arr Onon Lake 25 Aug. **GLOSSY IBIS**: one town of Manlius 7-16 Aug (DWC), third Regional fall record. Mute Swan: five Lyons Pond in Aug. Canada Goose: first flocks reported Biddlecum 21 Aug. Green-winged Teal: only two mid-summer reports; arr Onon Lake 21 Aug. N. Pintail: arr SVB 25 Aug. Blue-winged Teal: arr Onon Lake 5 Aug. N. Shoveler: male spent entire summer Fourth Lake (GL), first Regional summer record since 1972. Gadwall: arr Onon Lake 5 Aug. Am. Wigeon: arr Onon Lake 30 Aug. Hooded Merganser: arr SP 31 Aug.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: see intro; arr Onon Lake 15 July. Bald Eagle: imm DeWitt 17 Aug (REL). N. Harrier: arr SP 15 Aug. Red-shouldered Hawk: only one reported. Merlin: arr town of Webb 29 Aug. Peregrine Falcon: record early arr imm SP 8 Aug (FGS). Ruffed Grouse: no large populations reported. Wild Turkey: widely reported by residents in central Herkimer Co. n of the Mohawk River. Am. Coot: one near Rome 16 Aug. Black-bellied Plover: arr SP 8 Aug, max 34 Delta Lake 25 Aug. Lesser Golden Plover: arr Delta Lake 4 Aug. Semipalmated Plover: last Oneida Lake 8 June; arr Onon Lake 25 July. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Delta Lake 4 Aug. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Onon Lake 5 July. Solitary Sandpiper: arr Poolsbrook 12 July. Willet: one Onon Lake 11-16 Aug (FGS, mob). Upland Sandpiper: last near SVB 26 Aug. Ruddy Turnstone: last SVB 1 June, arr Onon Lake 8 Aug. Red Knot: arr SVB 25 Aug. Sanderling: last SVB 1 June, arr SVB 29 July. Baird's Sandpiper: arr Onon Lake 29 July. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr Onon Lake 29 June. Western Sandpiper: arr (two, FGS), SP 5 Aug, early. Least Sandpiper: last SVB 1 June, arr SVB 29 June, max 100 Delta Lake 25 Aug. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Onon Lake 29 July, max 27 Salmon River Reservoir 25 Aug. Stilt Sandpiper: arr Onon Lake 29 July, max 22 Onon Lake and 25 SVB on 8 Aug. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr Onon Lake 21 July. **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER**: adult calling, with Short-billed, Onon Lake 25 July (FGS), record early, fifth in last ten years. Wilson's Phalarope: one Onon Lake 27 Aug only report. Little Gull: juv SP after 24 Aug. Bonaparte's Gull: arr SVB 24 June. Caspian Tern: one Onon Lake 30 June (GH) unseasonal, arr Onon Lake 21 July, max 61 SP 8 Aug. Black Tern: scarce.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: about ten reported. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one reported. Long-eared Owl: one calling all summer Shackleton Point. Com. Night-hawk: nesting populations remained low, but record max 216 counted going south Syr 26 Aug (J. Propst *vide* DWC). Whip-poor-will: several new sites north and east of Rome.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: one Tug Hill Plateau 7 July, two or three near Hinckley Reservoir mid-July are at peripheral locations. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: present as far south as Gray, Herkimer Co.; at least one Nelson Swamp to 25 June (MSR), status uncertain; arr SP 15 Aug. ACADIAN FLYCATCHER: one near Minetto 22 June (PDeB, mob) to 9 Aug, when accompanied by fledgling (DWC), is our first modern Regional nesting record; another near Bridgeport 11 June (DMO) is tenth Regional record. Bank Swallow: max 11,000 Clay Marsh 3 Aug. Barn Swallow: max 14,000 Clay Marsh 3 Aug. Com. Raven: nesting confirmed near Nobleboro, Herkimer Co., in June (FGS). Red-breasted Nuthatch: present in many low elevation pine plantations this summer; no evidence of an irruption by end of season. Carolina Wren: bird at StMC disappeared 7 July, then singles appeared irregularly at three Syr sites thru mid-Aug; family group near Brookfield (DWC) first confirmed Regional nesting since 1969. Winter Wren: very scarce everywhere. Sedge Wren: reported from four sites including one feeding young Clay (DWC) and one near Alder Creek (FGS) remote from most Regional reports. E. Bluebird: John Rodgers' bluebird trail in central Oswego Co. produced almost 500 fledged young this year, showing what dedicated management can accomplish. Brown Thrasher: scarce in western half of Region, evidently more numerous in the southeastern part.

VIREOS-WARBLES: Tennessee Warbler: last SSSP 2 June, arr Florence 27 July. N. Parula: found south to Nobleboro area. Magnolia Warbler: arr SP 24 Aug. Cape May Warbler: arr Salmon River Reservoir 25 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr SP 31 Aug. Black-throated Green Warbler: arr SP 8 Aug, only obvious migrant. Pine Warbler: family group Battle Isle State Park (PDeB), new nesting locality. Bay-breasted Warbler: pair feeding young town of Webb 10 July (FGS) first confirmed Regional nesting since 1962. Blackpoll Warbler: several Granny Marsh 17 July (GL) of uncertain status. Louisiana Waterthrush: migrant SSSP 8 Aug (FGS). Hooded Warbler: two males near Nobleboro to early July (PDeB, DWC, FGS) evidently unpaired, first summer records from Adirondacks. Wilson's Warbler: arr SP 24 Aug.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Grasshopper Sparrow: widespread but scarce. Henslow's Sparrow: found at four sites only. Lincoln's Sparrow: found nesting in dry heath south to Hinkley Reservoir area (FGS). Orchard Oriole: male near Camillus 12 June (MSR) only report. Red Crossbill: occasional in ones and twos in conifers thru season. Evening Grosbeak: two sw of Minetto 9 Aug (DWC) and one E. Syr 24 Aug were the only reports away from known nesting areas.

Educational Communications, Upstate Medical Center,
766 Irving Ave., Syracuse, New York 13210

REGION 6 – ST. LAWRENCE

KENNETH L. CROWELL and GERALD A. SMITH

Farmers say that you can't count on three good crops—if it's a good hay year, it's too wet for the corn. June was cold and wet; July and August dry. Thus, it was a rough nesting season—at first too wet for swallows and then too dry for waterfowl. In fact, it was the third coldest June since 1890. Mean temperatures