

REGION 2 - GENESEE

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The summer began wet and ended dry. What started out to be a monsoon season finished much the same as last year. The birds must have been confused too. June's rainfall was more than double the average at 5.65 inches. July went the opposite direction with 0.98 inches. August rainfall improved with a total of 2.46 inches, which was still slightly below normal. Temperatures didn't deviate much from the normal range with a slightly above average 67.4° in June, an above average of 72.8° in July and a below average of 68.5° in August.

Birding in general slacked off during the summer. Reporters were few yet the number of species reported was about average. This may be attributed to the wide range of habitats covered. How did the birds fare? As usual some were helped and others were harmed. The rainy weather of June may have caused some problems for the early nesters but, on the other hand, it produced ideal conditions for insect, particularly mosquito, production. Ground nesters had some difficulty while the insect eaters profited. Those species that could continue nesting during the rainy period were rewarded with abundant food afterwards. Marsh and water birds may have been affected by the higher water levels.

June traditionally has a few records of late migrants. Some lingering waterfowl, a few shorebirds, and some warblers put in appearances. Osprey and Bald Eagle were reported frequently in June. The highlight most certainly was an immature *Mississippi Kite* sighted by Frank Nicoletti at Braddock Bay on 7 Jun. Also notable were the 60 migrating Eastern Bluebird at Braddock Bay on 3 Jun. Similar flights have been documented in past years, but their significance remains somewhat puzzling. We apparently have late spring flight to match our early spring movement, but from and to where these birds are going is a mystery.

There were a variety of ups and downs among avian populations. Common Loon was reported during June and July, but all were late migrants or nonbreeding wanderers. Double-crested Cormorant was noted throughout with a general increase in numbers during the season. Both bitterns were relatively scarce. Waterfowl produced some surprises. July records included a Redhead and a Ruddy Duck. American Wigeon nested on the Sawyer Road borrow pit in Carlton. Red-breasted Merganser was reported throughout the season. Local breeding Wood Duck seemed to do fairly well. Mallard numbers may have been off a bit and teal continued to be down from recent years. Turkey Vulture was noted nesting in Webster, a new location, while the population at Letchworth SP seemed stable. Northern Harrier was seen regularly throughout the season with juveniles noted in August. Accipiters were noted in fewer numbers. There were no Red-shouldered Hawk reports. Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel numbers were about average. Wild Turkey were noted in some unusual locations in their continued expansion. A bird wandering along the edge of

Route 390 in Rush was certainly a surprise. There seemed to be somewhat of a disagreement between observers on the status of the rails. Some reported fewer than usual numbers while others thought things were about average. The wet June may have increased reports of birds at marsh edges, which are generally more accessible. Nesting American Coot were scarce. Upland Sandpiper enjoyed a bit of an expansion year with a few reports from new locations, but numbers were down at some traditional breeding locations. Gulls provided some of the more interesting highlights. Bonaparte's gull totals reached unprecedented summer numbers, and June records of **Franklin's, Laughing, Little** and Iceland Gull made gulls a main topic of discussion. A rooftop colony of Ring-billed Gull was a first for the Region. The status of the colony may be in jeopardy because the odor and debris are close to air intake systems and may not be endearing the gulls to the proprietors. An estimate of 100 nests was obtained in a June count. There were fairly good numbers of terns arriving late. Cuckoo reports were few. Few Short-eared Owl had been seen before the nesting season and nesting was not confirmed as has been the case in recent years. Whip-poor-will was scarce again. There were plenty of bugs for the flycatchers this summer. Acadian Flycatcher remained stable with populations in Letchworth and Bergen Swamp. Swallows remained about average with a slight increase in Cliff Swallow reports. House Wren was down as was Marsh Wren, and Sedge Wren was once again unreported. Carolina Wren held its own for another season. Bluebirds were a highlight. Some observers reported them everywhere and the bluebird trails south of Rochester were quite productive. Northern Mockingbirds were well reported. Warblers were reported as being down by some observers. Golden-winged Warbler was one of the species mentioned often. Prairie Warbler was reported breeding in reduced numbers. Cerulean Warbler and the often associated Yellow-throated Vireo may have suffered from the dry July and August. Warbling and Red-eyed Vireo numbers were relatively stable with the latter still at somewhat reduced numbers from historical populations. The grassland sparrows always seem to pop up when declines are discussed. The general consensus was that once again Grasshopper, Henslow's and Vesper Sparrows were reduced in number. Some feel that habitat changes have caused problems for the group, particularly for Henslow's Sparrow, whose habitat requirements seem to be somewhat more narrowly defined. Nations Road in Avon was one of the few consistent spots for Henslow's. Mendon also hosted a small population. Savannah Sparrow continued to be well reported. Orchard Oriole put in its expected appearance at Point Breeze; a male at Bergen Swamp was more unusual.

July and August usually produce the first migrants for the fall season. This year was not one of the banner years. Shorebird habitat, as usual, was minimal. Whimbrel at Ontario Beach was a minor highlight. Baird's Sandpiper were early and in good numbers. Migrant songbirds were few and far between. The highlight there had to be White-winged Crossbill, a harbinger of a finch winter?

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Abbreviations: BB - Braddock Bay, OB - Ontario Beach, Charlotte, CH - Cobb's Hill Reservoir, IB - Irondequoit Bay, LSP - Letchworth State Park, MB - Manitou Beach, MP - Mendon Ponds, WL - West Lakeshore.

LOONS-DUCKS: Common Loon: last MB 5 Jun; one CH 25 Jul, unusual time of the year. Double-crested Cormorant: max 300 BB 25 Aug. Great Egret: one-two BB 1-19 Jun. Am. Wigeon: two Carlton 6 Jul, breeding again. Redhead: one IB 25-28 Aug, unusual time of the year. Ring-necked Duck: one Greece 2-10 Jun, late. Greater Scaup: two WL 22 Jun, late. Oldsquaw: one Kendall 16 Aug, not unprecedented. Red-breasted Merganser: four BB 1-19 Jun, becoming a yearly occurrence. Ruddy Duck: one Kendall 16 Aug, unusual.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: one MP 17 Aug, unusual location. Mississippi Kite: *intro*. Bald Eagle: two BB 18-28 Jun, one Bristol Center 2 Jul, two BB 15-16 Aug, good summer. N. Goshawk: two Springwater 5-31 Aug, one BB 27 Aug, migrants? Black-bellied Plover: arr IB, OB 17 Aug. Semipalmated Plover: arr OB 21 Jul. Greater Yellowlegs: arr OB 17 Jul. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Fairport 16 Jul. Solitary Sandpiper: arr WL 15 Jul. Whimbrel: two OB 20 Jul, one Hamlin 31 Aug, usual totals. Ruddy Turnstone: arr two OB 21 Jul. Red Knot: one IB 22 Jun; which way was it going? Sanderling: 20 OB 4 Jun, unusual total for spring. Semipalmated Sandpiper: max 130 OB 4 Jun, arr 12 OB 21 Jul. Western Sandpiper: arr three OB 20 Aug. Baird's Sandpiper: one IB 14 Jun, unusual in spring; arr OB 21 Jul. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Fairport 16 Jul. Stilt Sandpiper: arr OB 20 Aug. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr two WL 12 Jul, numbers down. Wilson's Phalarope: arr IB 8 Aug. Franklin's Gull: one BB 23 Jun (mob). Laughing Gull: two BB 16 Jun (RO). Little Gull: one OB 30 Jun (RS), unseasonal. Ring-billed Gull: *intro*. Iceland Gull: one BB 1-15 Jun, unseasonal. Com. Tern: max 44 MB 29 Aug. Black Tern: last BB 25 Aug.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Whip-poor-will: one Webster 4 Jul (JCz), only report.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Olive-sided Flycatcher: arr MB 22 Aug. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr WL 26 Aug. Acadian Flycatcher: max three LSP 4, 22 Jun. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one Greece 14 Jun, very late. E. Bluebird: *intro*. N. Mockingbird: max four Avon 1 Jul, good total.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: arr MB 16 Aug. Tennessee Warbler: arr Greece 26 Aug. N. Parula: arr Webster 23 Aug. Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr Rochester 22 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr BB 26 Aug. Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Rochester 22 Aug. Blackpoll Warbler: arr WL 31 Aug. N. Waterthrush: arr Greece 26 Aug. Hooded Warbler: three Genesee Country Museum 24 Jun, nesting?; max 32 LSP 4 Jun, good total. Wilson's Warbler: arr two WL 31 Aug. Yellow-breasted Chat: one Avon 1 Jul, few reports.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Orchard Oriole: one Bergen Swamp 15 Jul, three Webster 14-16 Jul, away from traditional nesting sites. White-winged Crossbill: one Durand-Eastman Park 12 Aug (RS), early. Evening Grosbeak: four MB 29 Aug, only report.

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