

REGION 5 - ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

GENE HUGGINS

For the most part it was a very wet and damp summer with yearly rainfall for this time of the year exceeding the norm by five or six inches. In the western Adirondacks eleven days of rain in June and eight days in both July and August, along with a 4.5 inch cloudburst on 23 Jul, made it almost impossible for some birds to feed their nestlings on a diet of insects. Another cloudburst hit Syracuse with 2.50 inches in less than two hours on 28 Aug. That same evening two separate tornados touched down near Big Moose L, Herkimer Co., and at the State Fair Grounds in Syracuse. Obviously, rain gear became an all important item to bring with you on field trips.

Birds are not in the habit of ending their migration on 31 May, as witnessed by one observer at Derby Hill during the first two days of June. Among raptors eight Osprey, a Bald Eagle and 579 Broad-winged Hawk were observed along with substantial numbers of Blue Jay and Cedar Waxwing. Other interesting late migrants included Olive-sided Flycatcher and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet from the southern highlands of Onondaga Co.

In terms of nesting success, only one of the two Common Loon chicks reported from Limekiln L survived the summer for the first time in fifteen years. For the last several years, the population of Double-crested Cormorant on Wantry Island in Oneida L has steadily increased. Over fifty pairs fledged young this season. Osprey was successful in fledging two young each from three nests, two in the boundaries of Three Rivers Wildlife Management Area north of Baldwinsville and the third adjacent to the Little Salmon River Reservoir in Oswego Co. One other nest found near Moss Lake in the Adirondacks remained inactive for the summer. Unfortunately, one of the nests near Baldwinsville came down in a severe storm that passed through our area on 28 Aug. Common Tern nested primarily on Little and Long Island in Oneida Lake, with approximately 550 nests successfully fledging young. With May's record rainfall and several consecutive days of wet, cold weather in June, Tree Swallow and E. Bluebird young were adversely affected. Tree Swallow was reduced in half from the northern portion of our region, while E. Bluebird suffered a similar fate by losing 100 of their young along a bluebird trail in Oswego Co. Despite the loss, John Rogers reported that 453 bluebirds were successfully fledged, down slightly from the 508

fledged the previous summer. In addition, a third successful brood of E. Bluebird was observed on 24 Aug, an uncommon event for central New York. Since the conclusion of the breeding bird atlas project, successful nesting of Wild Turkey, Mourning Dove and House Finch have been reported from the Old Forge area. Other nesting highlights for the season include a new nesting site for Cerulean Warbler along Kirkville Rd near the border of Onondaga and Madison Co's and Orchard Oriole from the north shore of Oneida L.

Positives include a Great Egret at Moss L in the Adirondacks on 2 Aug and an increased number of reports for Ruby-throated Hummingbird, with one observer reporting a female feeding young thirty feet high in a Red Maple on 4 August. A record number of approximately 1500 Cliff Swallow were observed south and east of Oneida L on 20 August by Dorothy Crumb. And lastly, a small colony of Henslow's Sparrows continued to be seen until mid Aug.

Negatives for the season include no reports of Least Bittern and a possible range reduction for Upland Sandpiper, with the only observations coming from northern Oneida Co.

Shorebird migration was not impressive due to intense recreational use of Sandy Pond, Sylvan and Verona beaches, above average rainfall and a lack of plowed fields near Oneida L. Observers having an opportunity to visit Syracuse parks witnessed a poor migration of Common Nighthawk and almost no Yellow Warbler nesting or migrating. One observer noted that Savannah Sparrow is still common, but suggested that road frontage of hay fields are being eaten up by new houses as one factor in their decline.

Observers reported a total of 176 species and one hybrid for the summer. The most unusual of these were Greater Scaup, Acadian Flycatcher and Orchard Oriole. Other notable species observed were Great Egret, Bald Eagle, Whip-poor-will, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Com. Raven, Boreal Chickadee, Sedge Wren, Henslow's Sparrow and Lincoln's Sparrow.

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Abbreviations: Adks - Adirondacks; BBS - Breeding Bird Survey; DH - Derby Hill, OSWE; SPd - Sandy Pond, OSWE; SSSP - Selkirk Shores State Park, OSWE;

TRWMA - Three Rivers Wildlife Management Area, ONON; SVB - Sylvan and Verona Beach, ONEI; Syr - Syracuse.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: singles at Moss and Nick's L, two y at Limekiln L. Pied-billed Grebe: four Howland's I 8 Jul, only report. Double-crested Cormorant: max 475 SPd 12 Aug; *intro*. Am. Bittern: one near Port Byron 3 Aug, very scarce. Great Egret: one Oriskany Falls BBS 6 Jun; two SVB 24-31 Aug; two Delta L 31 Aug, *intro*. Green-backed Heron: max 12 Fort Bull, Rome 16 Aug. Black-crowned Night-Heron: one Fort Bull 1 Jul, 16 Aug. Wood Duck: max 70 Delta L 31 Aug. Green-winged Teal: max 15 Delta L 31 Aug. Am. Black Duck: five Delta L 31 Aug. N. Pintail: one Delta L 31 Aug. Blue-winged Teal: max 55 Delta L 31 Aug. Greater Scaup: one Erieville Res, third summer record (E Hawken). Com. Merganser: max 14 Delta L 31 Aug. Red-breasted Merganser: last Erieville Res 1 Jun, arr SPd 30 Aug.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: max 34 T Montezuma 8 Jul. Osprey: *intro*. Bald Eagle: imm DH 2 Jun, Hastings 24 Jun, Delta L 30 Jun, 11 Aug; ad Limekiln L 17 Jun. N. Harrier: seven reports. Broad-winged Hawk: *intro*. Am. Kestrel: twenty reports. Ring-necked Pheasant: three N Victory BSS 7 Jun, one TRWMA 8 Jul. Virginia Rail: two T Brutus 2 Jun, Utica Marsh 5 Jun, one SVB June. Com. Moorhen: max five SSSP 12 Jul. Semipalmated Plover: arr SPd 12 Aug, max there five. Killdeer: max 85 Paris Hill Uplands ONEI 31 Aug. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Holland Patent 20 Jul; max three T Clay 24-31 Aug. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Port Byron 3 Aug; max eight Delta L 31 Aug. Solitary Sandpiper: arr Erieville 23 Aug; max six T Clay 24-31 Aug. Upland Sandpiper: three Steuben 16 Jun, one Holland Patent 3 Jun to mid Jul. Ruddy Turnstone: arr SPd 20 Aug, max there two. Red Knot: one SPd 20 Aug, only report. Sanderling: arr SPd 12 Aug, max 53 there 20 Aug. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr SVB 1 Aug, max 56 SPd 20 Aug. Least Sandpiper: arr SPd 12 Aug, max 77 SPd 20 Aug. White-rumped Sandpiper: one SPd 23 Aug. Baird's Sandpiper: two SPd, one SVB 30 Aug. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr SVB 7 Aug; max four SPd 23 Aug. Stilt Sandpiper: three SPd 30 Aug, only report. Short-billed Dowitcher: one Lamson Rd OSWE 14 Jul, SVB 29 Aug. Com. Snipe: three T Clay 28-31 Aug. Bonaparte's Gull: arr SPd 12 Aug; max 220 SVB 29 Aug. Caspian Tern: max 68 SPd 20 Aug. Com. Tern: max 70 SVB 29 Aug. Black Tern: eight ad, four imm SSSP 12 Jul; max 15 SPd 23 Aug.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: max 59 Alder Creek BBS 16 Jun. Black-billed Cuckoo: three reports for the period. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: singles Erieville 17 Aug, Otisco L 31 Aug. E. Screech-Owl: pair with y DH 16 Jun; one Erieville 21-31 Aug. Barred Owl: one Fabius 23 Jun. Com. Nighthawk: max breeding population three Syr in July and one Utica in June; max 13 migrating Syr 29 Aug. Whip-poor-will: one Hinckley L 22 Aug, only report. Chimney Swift: max 40 Rome 16 Aug. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: eight McKeever BBS 17 Jun. Red-headed Woodpecker: pair with two y fledged Erieville 1 Jun-16 Jul; one DH 2 Jun; one Paris Hill Uplands 31 Aug. Black-backed Woodpecker: male Carter Station T Webb 10 Jun; one Third L Swamp 29 Jun.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Olive-sided Flycatcher: two Labrador Pd ONON

until 23 Jun, late migrants; three Wood's L Adks 5 Jul. E. Wood-Pewee: max 18 SPd 23 Aug. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: arr Erieville 12 Aug. **Acadian Flycatcher**: one Happy Valley WMA OSWE 15 Jun (BP). E. Kingbird: max 20 n shore Oneida L 25 Aug. Tree Swallow: max 300 SPd 30 Aug. N. Rough-winged Swallow: max 40 SPd 12 Aug. Bank Swallow: max 340 SPd 23 Aug. Cliff Swallow: *intro*. Barn Swallow: max 275 SPd 23 Aug. Gray Jay: one Old Forge Airport and n branch Moose R. Blue Jay: max 275 DH 2 Jun. Com. Raven: four Wood's L 5 Jul. Boreal Chickadee: one Rockdam Rd, Third L Swamp 29 Jun. Tufted Titmouse: none. Carolina Wren: reported from Syr, Oneida and Erieville. Sedge Wren: six Black Creek Rd T Clay 9 Jul-24 Aug (DWC, mob). Marsh Wren: max 21 Peat Swamp 19 Jun. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two Highland Forest 2 Jun, late migrants. E. Bluebird: *intro*. Veery: max 36 Kasaog BBS 16 Jun. Brown Thrasher: seven reports, very scarce. Cedar Waxwing: max 305 DH 1 Jun.

VIREOS-WARBLED: Philadelphia Vireo: arr SPd 30 Aug. Red-eyed Vireo: max 91 McKeever BBS 17 Jun. Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler: "Lawrence's" Hastings 2 Jun (BP). Golden-winged Warbler: one DH to 2 Jun, Ira 7 Jun, Alder Creek 16 Jun. Yellow Warbler: max 85 SPd 12 Aug. Magnolia Warbler: arr Syr 27 Aug. Cape May Warbler: arr SPd 30 Aug, Erieville 31 Aug. Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr SPd 30 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr SPd 30 Aug. Pine Warbler: arr Erieville 29 Aug. Bay-breasted Warbler: arr Erieville 29 Aug. Blackpoll Warbler: arr Erieville 18 Aug. Cerulean Warbler: arr Erieville 16 Aug; *intro*. Black-and-white Warbler: arr Erieville 21 Aug. Hooded Warbler: one Jones Hill 23 Jun. Wilson's Warbler: arr SPd 30 Aug. Canada Warbler: arr Rome 25 Aug.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Field Sparrow: max 11 Oriskany Fall BBS 6 Jun. Vesper Sparrow: eight reports. Savannah Sparrow: max 11 Oriskany Falls BBS 6 Jun. Grasshopper Sparrow: one Annsville 16 Jun. Henslow's Sparrow: six pairs W Monroe to 13 Aug (mob). Lincoln's Sparrow: five Wood's L 5 Jul. Swamp Sparrow: max 59 Peat Swamp 19 Jun. White-throated Sparrow: max 76 McKeever BBS 17 Jun. Orchard Oriole: imm W Monroe 25 Jun, two FL there late Aug. N. Oriole: max 20 N. Victory BBS 7 Jun, last heard Syr 29 Aug. White-winged Crossbill: max 25 T Webb 10 Jun. Pine Siskin: last DH 1 Jun. Am. Goldfinch: max 50 Labrador Pd 23 Jun.

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