

REGION 10 — MARINE

SEYMOUR SCHIFF AND ALVIN WOLLINS

The warm weather of the prior winter and spring reporting periods continued into the summer. Again there were heat records. This year has the dubious distinction of having had the most days over 90°, with the high for the season 102° on 21 Jul. The three summer months averaged 1.0° to 2.7° above normal while rainfall also was somewhat above normal.

On 19 Aug, at the end of the period, Hurricane Bob arrived. This storm skirted the outer banks of North Carolina and then hit the eastern half of Long Island and New England, causing extensive damage. It also produced avian records. During and immediately after the storm the most visible and "common" bird associated with it was the **Sandwich Tern**. Tony Lauro accumulated and sorted the sightings. He concluded that a total of twelve separate birds were seen from Georgica Pond on the east to Jones Beach on the west as a result of the storm. Reports to Tom Burke, the voice of the NYRBA, included four on 19 Aug, nine on 20 Aug, eleven on 21 Aug including **seven** seen at Jones Beach West End by Al Wollin, four on 24 Aug and two on 25 Aug. These counts do not include five seen by Joe DiCostanzo on Great Gull Island after the storm. This total surpasses the previous high of nine reported from Long Island after the passage of Hurricane Donna on 12 Sep 1960. During the storm a group consisting of Tony Lauro, Andy Baldelli, Paul Buckley and Bob Kurtz spent the day birding in a four-wheel-drive vehicle at the east end of Long Island, including spending some time within the eye of the storm. Their list of birds

sounds like the results of a pelagic trip. Those sightings of interest are: shearwater, species - 3; Wilson's Storm-Petrel - 12; **Leach's Storm-Petrel** - 2; **White Ibis** - 1; Hudsonian Godwit - 41, in the eye; Pectoral Sandpiper - 80, in the eye; phalarope, species - 1; **Sandwich Tern** - 2; **Sooty Tern** - 1; Black Skimmer - 35. On 20 Aug, the next day, John Fritz was at Sagaponack Pond and saw one Gull-billed Tern, five Royal Tern, two **Sandwich Tern** of which one remained to 24 Aug, six Roseate Tern, six Forster's Tern and one Black Tern. Although the hurricane track was mainly east of the Region, on its extreme west at Great Kills Park, Staten Island, Henry Flamm reported that all was calm on 19 Aug. However, the next day he saw 88 terns as follows: Caspian Tern - 2; Royal Tern - 57; Common Tern - 24; Forster's Tern - 2; Least Tern - 3. On 22 Aug there were 14 Royal, approximately 600 Common, six Forster's and one Black Tern. Two Royal Tern were still present on 25 Aug. In his experience, Caspian and Royal Terns are uncommon on Staten Island and until then he had seen only single birds of each species at any given time.

Another record which might be associated with the storm is a possible **White-winged Dove** discovered by John Askildsen, Andrew Baldelli and Scott Rea on 24 Aug, a few days after the passage of the hurricane. The record has been submitted to NYSARC for review.

In a more mundane vein, population trends for the Region appear to be unusually consistent considering how scattered the contributors are and the extent of the territories covered. In general Red-tailed Hawk is more numerous, while American Kestrel counts are down. Peregrine Falcon nesting in the Region was all within New York City. Nine pairs laid 22 eggs in 6 nests, 15 eggs hatched in five nests and all appeared to have fledged (compiled by Saul Frank). Among the water birds Double-crested Cormorant and Laughing Gull populations are expanding and these species are seen every where they might possibly be encountered. The land birds which have been increasing include Red-bellied Woodpecker and Carolina Wren, whereas Green-backed Heron, Wood Thrush, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow and Swamp Sparrow seem to be fewer in number or are entirely absent. The Least Flycatcher in Mary Laura Lamont's yard noted in the spring report set up a territory and sang for a mate; it was last seen and heard on 29 Jun. One especially ominous note comes from the Central Suffolk Co. Breeding Bird Census. Whereas three to seven of the ten parties usually see Purple Martin, this year only one party saw this species, a group of a mere six birds. Missing this year were three colonies, including one of 200 birds. There were similar

accounts from other areas. On a more positive note there was a report of an active colony in Islip.

The amount of rain was much less than last year and there were few and smaller rain puddles at the beach areas. As a consequence there were fewer quantities and variety of shorebirds at the beaches than last year. Following the trend of recent year, Brown Pelican made a strong showing this season.

Reports of pelagic trips from Montauk on 23 Jun were received *fide* NYRBA. James Clinton, Sr. reported sightings from the Finback II on several trips out of Montauk, and Peter Martin reported sightings 25-30 miles out of Fire Island Inlet. To summarize these reports, more of the common species and less of the uncommon ones were seen this period.

Jean and Ronald Bourque reported on this summer's events at Floyd Bennett Field. This area with extensive grasslands lies within the New York City borders and harbors a number of birds that one normally associates with rural areas. Among raptors there were four successful American Kestrel nests, a successful Peregrine Falcon nest on the nearby Marine Parkway bridge and one successful and five other occupied Barn Owl boxes, whose nesting success was unknown. Among grassland birds, seven Grasshopper Sparrow territories were established after the May mowing of the area. From here, one has to go all the way to east central SUFF to find another nesting area for this species. Migrant Upland Sandpiper and Bobolink were seen in spring and late summer but were not breeders. Forty Bobolink spent most of August in the field.

The beginning of the Fall migration was sporadic, uneven, and without too much excitement both before and after the hurricane. The first warblers arrived on Staten Island 6 Aug, but later elsewhere.

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Abbreviations: BNL - Brookhaven National Laboratory; CB - Cedar Beach; CSCBC - Central Suffolk Co. Breeding Bird Census (John Ruscica and James Clinton, compilers); FI - Fire Island; FBF - Floyd Bennett Field; GKP - Great Kills Park, Staten Island; JBWR - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; JBch - Jones Beach; JBWE - Jones Beach West End; LnIs - Line Islands; LI - Long Island; MPt - Montauk Point; NYRBA - New York Rare Bird Alert (Thomas W. Burke); Pkwy - Parkway; RMSP - Robert Moses State Park; ShIn - Shinnecock Inlet; SI - Staten Island.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: 12+ imm or non-breeding ad s shore of LI from MPt to JBch all season (mob), more than in recent years although 16 were reported in

1939. Horned Grebe: male in Alt plumage MPt 28 Jun (JF). Cory's Shearwater: 10 MPt 23 Jun (NYRBA); 30 off MPt 22 Jul 30 there 29 Jul, and 1 on 7 Aug (JC); present 25-30 mi off FI Inlet 27 Jul (PM). Greater Shearwater: 18 off MPT 23 Jun (NYRBA); 20 there 22 Jul, eight there 29 Jul (JC); and present 25-30 mi off FI Inlet 15 Jun (PM). Sooty Shearwater: four off MPT 23 Jun (NYRBA); present 25-30 mi off FI 15 Jun (PM). Wilson's Storm-Petrel: 15 off MPT 23 Jun (NYRBA); 25 there on 29 Jul (JC); present 25-30 mi off FI Inlet 15 Jun (PM); *intro*. **Leach's Storm-Petrel:** *intro*. **Brown Booby:** one off Democrat Pt FI 14 Jul (AJL), second sighting this year. **Brown Pelican:** three FI inlet 29 Jun; one JBWE 2 Jul (EL); 40 off Atlantic Beach 1 Aug (Burt Pettit) in morning and 24 in the afternoon (J.Talmidge *vide* JB); one East Moriches 2 Aug (JC); 16 JBWE 2 Aug (AJL); seven JBWE 6 Aug (TB); 24 Moriches Inlet 6 Aug (AB); one JBWE 16 Aug (Stan Lipkin); one JBWE 24 Aug (Rich Kelly). Great Cormorant: one, apparently injured, on e jetty L Montauk 4 Aug and 29 Aug (PM). Double-crested Cormorant: *intro*, 650 Lnls 17 Aug (AJL, AB). **White Ibis:** *intro*. Mute Swan: 153 JBWS East Pond 11 Aug (SS), almost twice the number seen there last year. White-winged Scoter: several e LI all season (mob). Hooded Merganser: one Basic plumage JBWS all summer (mob). Red-breasted Merganser: birds lingered into early summer.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Black Vulture:** one MPt 28 Jun (JF). Turkey Vulture: one flying over New Hyde P and Northern Pkwy 12 Jul (LS, Cherita Stark), one ShIn 11 Jul (JF). Bald Eagle: ad summered in the Montauk area. Broad-winged Hawk: one BNL early Jun-24 Jul (JC, JR). Red-tailed Hawk: *intro*. **Golden Eagle:** one BNL **9-10 Jul** (found by Richard Sautkochis, identified by JC), first summer record in the Region. Am. Kestrel: *intro*. Peregrine Falcon: *intro*. Ruffed Grouse: one CSCBC 15 June, 26 Aug (JF). Black Rail: four Capsauge Co P (Moriches Inlet) 28 Jul (AB). Sora: JBWS 5 Aug to end of period. Lesser Golden-Plover: arr Riverhead 2 Aug, max 36 on 30 Aug (JC). Am. Oystercatcher: two GKP 3 Jul (HF). Am. Avocet: one JBWS 1-25 Aug (mob). Willet: 750 non-breeders on mud flats Lnls 14 Jul (AJL, AB). Upland Sandpiper: *intro*; bred in Calverton (JC); migrants in Aug, max 26 Riverhead 17 Aug (JC, JR). Whimbrel: one GKP 13 Jul (HF), one CB 10 Jul (JF), several reports from 10 Aug to end of period. Hudsonian Godwit: *intro*, several other reports; 20 Lnls 3 Aug (AJL, AB). Marbled Godwit: one JBWS 1 Jun, another during the first three weeks Aug (mob); one to two Lnls during Aug (AJL, AB); two Sagaponack Pd 22 Aug (JF). Sanderling: 4000+ in a single flock JBWE 23 Aug (EL). W. Sandpiper: few seen compared to last year, which was a banner year for this species. White-rumped Sandpiper: 105 CB 24 Aug (NYRBA), while a goodly number, much fewer than last year. Baird's Sandpiper: one-two JBWS to MPt (mob) 10 Aug to end of period. Curlew Sandpiper: one JBWS 28 Jul-18 Aug (mob); one Lnls 3 Aug (AJL, AB). Buff-breasted Sandpiper: arr Riverhead 6 Aug, max ten at end of period (JC). Ruff: female JBWS 21 Jul (NYRBA). Short-billed Dowitcher: 900 Lnls 4 Jul (AJL, AB). Wilson's Phalarope: one to two Lnls 3 to 25 Aug (AJL, AB); one to three JBWS 4 to 17 Aug (NYRBA), four JBWS 25 Aug (JF). Red-necked Phalarope: one JBWS 19 Aug (NYRBA). Parasitic Jaeger: present 25-30 mi off FI Inlet 8 Jun (PM). Lesser Black-backed Gull: one Pt Lookout 19 Aug (SW). Caspian Tern: *intro*. Royal Tern: *intro*. **Sandwich Tern:** *intro*. Roseate Tern: *intro*. Com. Tern:

intro; 1800± at Sand Pt 21 Aug (GQ). Forster's Tern: *intro*. Black Tern: *intro*; Sand Pt 4 Aug (GQ). **Sooty Tern**: *intro*. Black Skimmer: *intro*.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: **White-winged Dove**: *intro*. Chuck-will's-widow: at CB and Riverhead. Whip-poor-will: one in backyard in Rockaway 12 Jul (John Bull), one Riverhead 14 Aug (JF). Red-bellied Woodpecker: *intro*.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Least Flycatcher: *intro*. **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**: one reported n Manhattan 16 Jul (Star Saphir). Purple Martin: *intro*. E. Bluebird: pair with four y from two broods Iselin Preserve 20 Jul (Dave Allen), others Suffolk Co. Loggerhead Shrike: one RMSP 15 Sep (mob).

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-throated Vireo: one BNL 12 Jun (JR), 24 Aug (JC). Warbling Vireo: ad FY Mill Neck 25 Jun (BC). Philadelphia Vireo: one MPt 31 Aug (NYRBA). Nashville Warbler: one Democrat Pt 17 Aug (AJL). Yellow-throated Warbler: one Clodin Woods, MPt 31 Aug (AJL, AB). Prothonotary Warbler: one Oyster Pd 24 Aug (AB, JA). N. Waterthrush: arr Rockville Centre 23 Jul (LF), hit plate glass window. Hooded Warbler: one Muttontown Preserve 11 July (AL).

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Summer Tanager: female BNL 28 Aug, another Wading River 29 Aug (JC). Dickcissel: one JBWE 3 Aug (EL). Clay-colored Sparrow: singing bird discovered Welwyn Preserve 1 Jun (RC). Vesper Sparrow: bred at Calverton (JC); male singing Calverton 4 Jul, also seen 17 Jul (JR). Lark Sparrow: one JBWE 29 Aug (Star Saphir). Grasshopper Sparrow: *intro*, bred at two locations Calverton (JC). Boat-tailed Grackle: common at JBWS. Orchard Oriole: one in female plumage singing with a mulberry in its beak Mill Neck 26 Jun (BC).

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