

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

GENE HUGGINS

The summer 1991 can best be described as being hot and very, very dry. The average temperature for the three month period was 2.1° above the norm of 68.7°. Fourteen days had maximum temperatures in the 90's, with a 96° high on 20 Jul. A low temperature of 48° was recorded on 6 Jun, with an accompanying late frost in the Adirondacks on the same date. Precipitation was well below normal for the first two months with only a total of 2.86 inches compared to the 7.36 inches normally expected. Rainfall for August was slightly above normal, attributable to a heavy downpour of 1.96 inches received on 9 Aug.

With favorable weather conditions, local birders were able to find 201 species and one hybrid, a notable contrast to the 176 observed the previous summer under wet skies. In terms of nesting success, Common Loons were successful in their nesting attempts for the first time in recent memory at Big Moose and Grey Lakes. Osprey successfully fledged two young each from two nests at the Three Rivers Wildlife Management Area. Other locations where Osprey were successful included Moss, Big Moose and Gull Lakes in the Adirondacks. The nest site adjacent to the Little Salmon River Reservoir in Oswego Co. remained inactive for the summer. For birds whose diet consists primarily of flying insects, it was an exceptional season. Two pairs of Eastern Phoebe had double nests, one at Limekiln Lake Campsite with four young each time and one at the Old Forge Airport with four young and three young. John Rogers reported that 580 E. Bluebirds were successfully fledged from the 453 boxes that he maintains on a trail in Oswego Co. A successful third brood of E. Bluebird was confirmed for the second consecutive year.

Unfortunately, the late spring migration of raptors did not occur over Derby Hill due to winds prevailing from the north during the first ten days of June. The only late spring migrant reported was an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Erieville on 3 Jun.

With the lack of rainfall, mudflats were more exposed, providing several localities that were suitable for migrant shorebirds. One outstanding area was found along the banks of the Seneca River at West Dead Creek Road a few miles west of Baldwinsville. Despite the unpredictable rise and fall of water levels, fourteen species of shorebirds were found there. Each year Delta Lake with its receding water level affords an opportunity to see a good variety of shorebirds. Sixteen species were observed at this site including the Region's fourth record of **Marbled Godwit**.

Other highlights include the region's second and third records for **Am. White Pelican** and a Snowy Egret. More Ruby-throated Hummingbird were reported — 49 compared to the 21 reported last year. A seldom seen Sedge Wren was reported for the second consecutive year. Adjacent to the extensive pine plantations near Erieville MADI, an unseasonal but carefully observed Ruby-crowned Kinglet was noted outside the home of Ginny Skoglund on 3 Jul. Record early arrivals for N. Parula on 2 Aug and Blackpoll Warbler on 1 Aug were observed by Elva Hawken at Erieville, too. Later and in the same locality Elva had thirteen species of warblers on 19 Aug. Finally, a colony of Henslow's Sparrows persisted until mid summer near the north shore of Oneida Lake.

Negatives for the season include low numbers of Pied-billed Grebe, Least Bittern, N. Harrier, Red-shouldered Hawk, Com. Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Red-headed Woodpecker, Blue-winged Teal, Nashville Warbler, Rufous-sided Towhee and all grassland sparrows.

One final and interesting note was the difficulty ski tow operators had with Common Raven this summer at Mc Cauley Mtn, near Old Forge. The birds were landing on the switches located on the towers, thereby shutting down the tow unexpectedly. Imagine the consternation felt by vacationers.

A special thanks to Gary Lee for his contributions to the introduction of this report.

Contributors: Sue Adair, Carol Adams, Sue Boettger, David Cesari, Dorothy W. Crumb, Paul DeBenedictis, Robert L. Evans, William T. Gruenbaum, John Hanyak, Elva Hawken, Gene Huggins, Gary Lee, Kay McIntyre, Ferne F. Merrill, David Nash, Belle Peebles, Bill Purcell, John Rogers, Margaret S. Rusk, Tom Shuman, Ginny Skoglund, Maureen Staloff.

Abbreviations: Adks - Adirondacks; FH - Fairhaven, Little Sodus Bay and vicinity, CAYU; LOL- Lake Ontario littoral, OSWE; SPd - Sandy Pond, OSWE; SVB - Sylvan and Verona Beach, ONEI.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: four pair Stillwater Res; FL at Big Moose, Moss, Nick's and Grey Lakes. Pied-billed Grebe: singles Clay Marsh 6 Jun-31 Jul, Howland's I 22 Jun. **Am. White Pelican**: two Cross L 1-5 Jun, one Oneida L 13, 14 Aug. Double-crested Cormorant: max 1800 SPd 31 Aug. Am. Bittern: two Toad H 2 Jun, one FH 8 Jun, one Third L 5 Jul. Least Bittern: singles Clay M 5 Jun, Sterling 14 Jun, Rome Marsh 29 Jul. Great Egret: singles Baldwinsville 11 Jul, OnonL 15 Aug. **Snowy Egret**: imm OnonL 14 Aug (BP). Green-backed Heron: max 22 OnonL, Clay M 31 Jul. Mute Swan: imm Rome 25-29 Jun, one Delta L 29 Jul-30 Aug, origin uncertain. Wood Duck: max 80 Delta L 18 Aug. Green-winged Teal: max 20 Delta L 25 Aug. Am. Black Duck: twelve Delta L 20 Aug. N. Pintail: two Delta L 8 Aug. Blue-winged Teal: max 20 Delta L 30 Aug. Gadwall: two SPd 16 Aug. Com. Goldeneye: female Twitchell L Adks 2 Jul. Com. Merganser: max 20 Delta L 30 Aug.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Osprey: *intro*. Bald Eagle: two imm Delta L 8 Aug; single imm

Third L 5 Jul, Delta L 19 Aug. N. Harrier: nine reports. Red-shouldered Hawk: one Old Forge 7 Jun. Broad-winged Hawk: six reports. Merlin: one Rome-Delta L area 30 Aug. Virginia Rail: two Rome M 29 Jul. Sora Rail: four Rome 29 Jul. Com. Moorhen: five reported, one Sangerfield Marsh ONEI 25 Jun, new location. Black-bellied Plover: arr Delta L 2 Aug, max there five 19 Aug. Lesser Golden-Plover: arr Delta L 19 Aug. Semipalmated Plover: arr Baldwinsville 17 Jul, max 35 Delta L 25 Aug. Killdeer: max 147 Oneida L 23 Aug. Greater Yellowlegs: arr Cicero 16 Jul, max ten Delta L 24 Aug. Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Baldwinville 8 Jul, max 50 Delta L 19 Aug. Solitary Sandpiper: arr Baldwinsville 11 Jul, max eight there 27 Jul. **Willet**: one SPd 20 Aug (EH & KMcl). Upland Sandpiper: max nine Alder Creek BBS 8 Jun, nine Smith Ridge 9 Jul. Whimbrel: one SPd 24 Aug. **Marbled Godwit**: one Delta L 29-31 Aug (D Cesari & M Staloff). Ruddy Turnstone: arr SPd 4 Aug, max two there 24 Aug. Red Knot: one SPd 25 Aug, only report. Sanderling: arr SPd 4 Aug, max 68 there mid Aug. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr Baldwinsville 18 Jul, max 100 Delta L 25 Aug. Least Sandpiper: arr Baldwinsville 8 Jul, max 50 there. White-rumped Sandpiper: singles OnonL 7 Aug, Delta L 20 Aug. Baird's Sandpiper: arr Baldwinsville 29 Jul, max six SPd 31 Aug. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Baldwinsville 27 Jul, max 30 Delta L 19 Aug. Dunlin: ad in Alt plumage SPd 4-31 Aug (mob), early or perhaps present all summer. Stilt Sandpiper: arr Baldwinsville 29 Jul, last there 27 Aug. Short-billed Dowitcher: arr Baldwinsville 15 Jul, max eight Delta L 24 Aug. Com. Snipe: four Wood's L Adks 7 Jun. Wilson's Phalarope: imm Baldwinsville 25-29 Aug. Little Gull: two-three ads SPd 4-25 Aug, one imm 16-25 Aug. Bonaparte's Gull: arr SPd 4 Aug, max 297 Oneida L 23 Aug. Caspian Tern: max 45 SPd 4 Aug. Com. Tern: max 133 Oneida L 23 Aug. Black Tern: max 13 LOL 22 Jun.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning Dove: max 70 LOL 22 Jun. Black-billed Cuckoo: seven reports for the period. Yellow-billed Cuckoo: one Camillus Valley 12 Jul, only report. Barred Owl: ad with two y Beaver L 17 Jun. Com. Nighthawk: max breeding population four Syracuse in July; max 34 migrating Syracuse 22 Aug. Whippoorwill: four Constantia 9 Jun. Chimney Swift: max 50 Rome 14 Aug. Ruby-throated Hummingbird: three W Monroe 6 Jul; *intro*. Red-headed Woodpecker: two Erieville 1-22 Jul, one Nichol's Pd 23 Jun. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max seven McKeever BBS 9 Jun.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Olive-sided Flycatcher: max five Twn of Webb 29 Jun; *intro*. E. Wood-Pewee: max 11 SVB 22 Aug. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: max three Old Forge, Wood's L 7 Jun, arr Erieville 16 Aug. Alder Flycatcher: eight Old Forge, Wood's L 7 Jun. Willow Flycatcher: max 19 Clay Marsh 5 Jun. E. Kingbird: max 12 Rome 29 Jul. Purple Martin: max 31 Oneida L 9 Jul. Tree Swallow: max 600 SPd 16 Aug. N. Rough-winged Swallow: max nine Alder Creek BBS. Bank Swallow: max 300 SPd 4 Aug. Cliff Swallow: max 180 Oneida L 11 Aug. Barn Swallow: max 160 SPd 16 Aug. Gray Jay: one n branch Moose R. Com. Raven: eight Third L 4 Aug; *intro*. Boreal Chickadee: one Rockdam Rd Moose R area 28 Jul. Carolina Wren: at least five Syracuse-DeWitt mid-summer. House Wren: max 19 Alder Creek BBS 8 Jun. Sedge Wren: one Twn of Clay 15 Jun, 6 Jul; *intro*. Marsh Wren: max 25 Clay Marsh 5 Jun.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: *intro*. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: three Toad Harbor 2 Jun. E. Bluebird: *intro*. Veery: max 24 Kasoag BBS 8 Jun. Swainson's Thrush: four Wood's L 29 Jun. Hermit Thrush: max 13 McKeever BBS 9 Jun. Wood Thrush: max 37 Alder Creek BBS 8 Jun. Brown Thrasher: three SPd 24 Aug; twelve reports for season. Am. Pipit: arr SPd 25 Aug. Cedar Waxwing: max 70 Oneida L area 18 Aug.

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: Philadelphia Vireo: arr Noyes Sanctuary 31 Aug. Red-eyed Vireo: max 94 McKeever BBS 9 Jun. Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler: "Brewster's" Toad H 2 Jun (BP). Golden-winged Warbler: two's Toad H 2 Jun, N. Victory BBS 6 Jun. Tennessee Warbler: one singing Bald Mt Adks 3 Jul; arr Erieville 12 Aug. N. Parula: two Carter Station, Twitchell L 12 Jul; *intro*. Yellow Warbler: max 62 Sterling, N. Victory BBS 6 Jun. Cape May Warbler: arr Erieville 19 Aug. Black-throated Blue Warbler: arr SVB 22 Aug. Yellow-rumped Warbler: arr SVB 15 Aug. Blackburnian Warbler: arr SPd 24 Aug. Pine Warbler: arr SVB 22 Aug. Bay-breasted Warbler: six s branch Moose R 23 Aug; arr Erieville 19 Aug. Blackpoll Warbler: two s branch Moose R 23 Aug; *intro*. Cerulean Warbler: four w Oswego Co 15 Jun. Black-and-white Warbler: arr SPd 4 Aug. Am. Redstart: arr SPd 4 Aug. Ovenbird: max 24 Kasoag BBS 8 Jun. N. Waterthrush: arr SPd 31 Aug. Connecticut Warbler: one SPd 22 Aug (JH & TS), early. Com. Yellowthroat: max 44 Alder Creek BBS 8 Jun. Hooded Warbler: max 14 Noyes S 20 Aug. Wilson's Warbler: arr Erieville 19 Aug; max five SPd 25 Aug. Canada Warbler: arr SPd 25 Aug.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rufous-sided Towhee: seven W Monroe 6 Jul. Field Sparrow: eight Carpenter's Brook ONON 19 Jun. Vesper Sparrow: five reports. Savannah Sparrow: max 14 Erieville 15 Aug, low. Grasshopper Sparrow: eight reports from five localities. Henslow's Sparrow: three W Monroe 2 Jun-20 Jul, one Erieville 4 Jul. Lincoln's Sparrow: ten Wood's L 29 Jun. Swamp Sparrow: max 31 Clay M 4 Jul. E. Meadowlark: max 18 Alder Creek BBS 8 Jun. Brown-headed Cowbird: max 76 N. Syracuse 7 Aug. Purple Finch: nine Erieville 4 Jul. White-winged Crossbill: Moose R area 28 Jul. Am. Goldfinch: max 75 w Oswego Co 15 Jun.

Corrigenda: Kingbird 41:115, 117 There are reports for Long-eared Owl from 1986 to 1989 instead of two reports for Long-eared Owl being the first in six years; 41:115 account of N. Harrier should read: four SVB 22 Dec-1 Jan, Oneida R area 23 Feb.

1065 Westmoreland Ave., Syracuse, New York 13210