

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

JOHN M. C. PETERSON

As lovely as the summer was, the season was marked by a severe drought. June, for example, had only 1.28 inches of rainfall (about a third normal). Temperatures were generally moderate in June, with the last frost at Moose River R.A. on 6 Jun, although Owls Head dropped to 24° on 9 Jun. Peru received 1.2 inches of rain on 12 Jun, but the rest of the Region saw only a trace, at best. Similarly, Malone had a 1.26 inch shower on 6 Jul, while only 0.37 inches fell at Elizabethtown and Plattsburgh that day. By the end of July, monthly rainfall was only 2.62 inches, and three inches below the annual average. The drought continued through August, with thermometers at times climbing above 100°, although 25 Aug saw an overnight low of 47°. By the end of the season, Lake Champlain stood just over 94 feet, approaching the low record of 92.17 feet set in fall. The summers of 1970, '75, '78, and '82 were as low as 1991, however, and such low levels were more common early in this century. The low levels exposed mudflats along the Champlain shoreline, bringing the first migrant shorebirds in as early as 15 Jul. Overall diversity was fair, with 156 species reported, up from 142 last summer, but still far short of the 200 found at the height of the Atlas effort in 1984.

Restoration successes continued. Common Loon successfully nested on one of two floating nest platforms placed in Upper Ausable Lake by the St. Hubert's Club: the first known use of such artificial islands in the Adirondacks or the state. The platforms were tried after the pair failed due to a rising lake that flooded their nest in 1990. Ospreys reared two young on a new nest platform erected in Ausable Point G.M.A. by the NYS DEC, and a similar experiment at Sand Bar Refuge, VT, also was reportedly successful; these appear to be the first recorded Osprey nestings on L. Champlain. Elsewhere in the Region, the DEC found Osprey success was about the same as last year. All three Franklin Co. Bald Eagle eyries were again active, producing a total of five eaglets, two more than last year, but the same as 1989. Three of the five Essex Co. Peregrine Falcon sites fledged a total of six young, one less than last year: Elizabethtown (3 fledged), Keene (2 chicks, 1 fledged), Keeseville (active, but failed), Westport (territorial pair), and Wilmington (2 fledged). Although the sites remain active, productivity remains below the ten young in 1988 and again in 1989.

A total of 1 nestling Double-crested Cormorant, 7 Black-crowned Night-Heron, 1,000 Ring-billed Gull (plus 2 adults), and 143 Herring Gull chicks were banded on the Four Brothers Islands on 15-17 Jun. Wardens Rachel

Hopkins and Rich MacDonald counted 445 Double-crested Cormorant nests, up 10% from 404 last year. Other interesting species at the islands included two Common Loon on 10 Jun, six Cattle Egret on Island "B" on 15 Jun and 13 Aug, a Brant on 15 Jun, three-four Canada Goose 10-15 Jun, a maximum of 15 Gadwall on 10 Jun and a pair 15-17 Jun, a drake Red-breasted Merganser found dead on Isl. "D" 17 Jun, and an estimated seven pairs of Great Black-backed Gull. A dead Ring-billed Gull found on Isl. "C" 15 Jun had been banded there as a chick on 12 Jun 1982, the first day of banding under High Peaks Audubon management.

Low lake levels, as noted, produced excellent shorebirding on the mudflats at Plattsburgh and Westport, with 15 species recorded. The season also was enlivened by two reports of **Great Egret**.

Near Elizabethtown, even sapling wild cherry trees were bent over by the weight of their fruit, while blackberries, highbush cranberries, and dogwoods also fruited heavily. From Hamilton Co. Gary Lee reported, "Much wild food: berries, cherries, nuts, cone crop on balsam fir, white pine, and red spruce," adding that Evening Grosbeaks were feeding cherries to their young in Blue Mountain Lake on 21 Jul. Bob McKinney noted about 40 Evening Grosbeaks in HAMI between 15-20 Jul, commenting, "Great summer for these birds. I can't recall seeing or hearing more, in summer, than I did in July. Only 4 in August." These reports, as well as White-winged Crossbill at Moose River R.A. 7-28 Jul and at Ferd's Bog 1-21 Aug, bode well for an interesting winter ahead.

Observers: Steven Arras, Sharon Bennett, Geoffrey Carleton, Russell Cole, Dorothy Crumb, Charlcie Delehanty, Frannie Elder, Betsy Franz, Richard Guthrie, Judy & Roger Heintz, Candy & John Hess, Rachel Hopkins, Hal Kline, William Krueger, Gary Lee, Rich MacDonald, Robert McKinney, Laura Meade, Charles Mitchell, John & Susan Peterson, Atea Ring, Elton Rising, Harold Silver, Pat Taber, Jim Throckmorton, Langdon Stevenson.

Abbreviations: FB - Ferd's Bog; FBI - Four Brothers Islands; GBBS - Gabriels Breeding Bird Survey; HFBBS - Hope Falls BBS; MRRA - Moose River Recreational Area; SRFBS - St. Regis Falls BBS; TL - Tupper Lake

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two Corlear Bay and two Schuyler 1 10 Jun; still on eggs Bug L 13 Jul, but eggs rolled out of nest 5 Aug by river otter GL believes; pair with chick Putnam Pd, ESSE, 12 Aug, unexpected; *intro*. Pied-billed Grebe: Cedar R Flow 19 Jun; pair with 4 y there 16 Jul a good find. Double-crested Cormorant: imm Westport 6 Aug; 12 TL 21 Aug; *intro*. Least Bittern: Ausable Marsh 2 Jul (SB), rarely reported. **Great Egret**: one Westport 24-29 Jul (GC); one Seventh L HAMI 26 Jul (GL). Cattle Egret: *intro*. Black-crowned Night-Heron: *intro*. Brant: *intro*. Canada Goose: nine Westport 15-29 Jul unexpected; 70 TL municipal beach Aug doing well; *intro*. Mallard: 4+ pair FBI. Gadwall: *intro*. Red-breasted Merganser: *intro*.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey Vulture: 2 MRRA 22 Aug unusual boreal location. Osprey: *intro*. Bald Eagle: imm Wickham Marsh 3 Jun (JP); *intro*. Peregrine Falcon: *intro*. Spruce Grouse: Forestdale Rd, CLIN, 28 Jun (WK). Virginia Rail: Ausable WMA 26 Jul only report. Sora: ad and yg Brown's Tract Stream 2 Jul a good find. Black-bellied Plover arr Plattsburgh 30 Aug. Lesser Golden-Plover: arr Plattsburgh 16 Aug. Semipalmated Plover: arr Plattsburgh 30 Jul. Greater Yellowlegs: on Westport 29 Jul, Lesser Yellowlegs: arr Plattsburgh 30 Jul. Solitary Sandpiper: arr Plattsburgh 18 Aug, Cedar R 19-23 Aug unexpected location. Red Knot: arr Plattsburgh 29 Aug. Sanderling: arr Plattsburgh 18 Aug. Semipalmated Sandpiper: arr Plattsburgh 30 Jul. Least Sandpiper: arr Westport 15 Jul, max five there 29 Jul. Pectoral Sandpiper: arr Westport 15 Jul; max three Westport 29 Jul & 6 Aug. Long-billed Dowitcher: arr Westport 6 Aug. Bonaparte's Gull: max 200 arr Westport 29 Jul. Ring-billed Gull: *intro*. Herring Gull: *intro*. Great Black-backed Gull: *intro*. Black Tern: one TL Marsh 10 Jun (CD), only report.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Black-billed Cuckoo: two Hogansburg 15 Jun; GBBS 30 Jun; HFBBS 4 Jul; Cedar R 15-20 Jul; Cedar R Flow 30 Jul; an excellent showing. Com. Nighthawk: one-two TL village 3-8 Aug (CD); Terry Mt CLIN, 30 Aug (C&JH). Ruby-throated Hummingbird: apparent disappearance TL Jun, but three-five at feeders there Jul-Aug. Hairy Woodpecker: one with full orange cap Ausable Pt 11 Jun (LS). Three-toed Woodpecker: FB 14 Jul, 1 Aug. Black-backed Woodpecker: Chubb R 8 Jun; FB 12-16 Aug, FY there 21 Aug, late.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLING: Olive-sided Flycatcher: transient Elizabethtown 6 Jul (JP), yet breeding birds at Chubb R by 8 Jun and still at FB 12 Jul, MRRA 28 Jul. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Chubb R, FB, SRFBBS. **Willow Flycatcher**: one-two singing males Ausable Pt 11 Jun (LS); "fitz-bew" still there 26 Jul (WK), little known in Region. Gray Jay: FB from 12 Jul, chasing Am. Kestrel there 21 Aug (GL); three L Lila 1 Aug (RC). Boreal Chickadee: FB; MRRA. Tufted Titmouse: two locations Elizabethtown Jul. Gray-cheeked Thrush: Lyon Mt (3,830') CLIN 13 Jun (LS); young bird banded Cedar R Jul (RM), both "Bicknell's." N. Mockingbird: imm Westport 17 Aug (AR, PT).

VIREOS-WARBLED: Yellow-throated Vireo: singing male Crown Pt peninsula 29 Jul, rarely reported. Philadelphia Vireo: Terry Mt CLIN 29 Aug (C&JH), only report. Red-eyed Vireo: max 72 HFBBS. Tennessee Warbler: GBBS 30 Jun. Black-throated Blue Warbler: max 20 in flock along Bug L trail 5 Aug (GL), more than usual. Pine Warbler: Speculator 4 Jul (BF, RG) only report. Bay-breasted Warbler: HFBBS only report. Blackpoll Warbler: Chubb R 8 Jun; Lyon Mt CLIN 13 Jun; West Canada L 31 Jul where Bay-breasted Warbler was found in 1983 (see Atlas); several singing males in 2 mi stretch by Cellar & Bradley Brks. Ovenbird: max 22 HFBBS. Mourning Warbler: Cedar R; two SRFBBS.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Scarlet Tanager: four HFBBS (RG); "a lot" (GL); "good year" (CD). **Clay-colored Sparrow**: singing male GBBS FRAN 30 Jun (MK,TM), an excellent find. Lincoln's Sparrow: nest with 4 eggs FB 3 Jun (GL); widely reported.

Bobolink: male on a "little sort of island" in the middle of FB 27 Jun (DC). Rusty Blackbird: FL Wilson Pd 5 Jun. Purple Finch: four reports of 28 individuals, probably underestimate of actual numbers. House Finch: three Cedar R; eight HFBBS, but hordes along lakeshore at Essex. White-winged Crossbill: *intro*. Pine Siskin: Chubb R 8 Jun; Raquette L 15 Jul may also bode well for winter. Evening Grosbeak: 4 GBBS 30 Jun; 5 SRFBBS 3 Jul; TL feeder from 13 Jul; Chubb R & FB 16 Jul; *intro*.

ADDENDUM: **Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler:** "Brewster's" type with full yellow cap, black eye stripe, blue to blue-gray upper parts, two broad yellow wing-bars, white throat, chest, and belly, lacking any yellow band Blue Mountain Rd and Balsam Cr FRAN 30 May (WK), first Regional record.

Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, New York 12932