

REGION 10 — MARINE

SEYMOUR SCHIFF AND ALVIN WOLLIN

The Summer was both cool and wet. The average temperature for June was 1.1°F below normal, 2.5°F below normal for July and 2.4°F below normal for August. There were only a half dozen days with highs above 90°F. For those who dislike the heat, this would have been an ideal period, except for the rain. There was precipitation on at least one of the days of almost every weekend of the season. Rainfall for June was 4.77 inches versus an average of 3.23 inches. Rainfall for July was 0.72 inches above normal, but rainfall for August was 0.54 less than normal. This was barely noticed, since it seemed to fall mostly on weekends. This cool, wet weather pattern may or may not have contributed to the season's very unusual post breeding migrants.

There is increasing interest in the wetlands under the city's jurisdiction, coupled with expanded efforts to maintain and preserve them, by various New York City agencies. The bird life of the marshes on Staten Island is getting visibility that it had not had before. We are indebted to Christopher Aquila of the Salt Marsh Restoration Group of the New York City Parks-Greenbelt Administration and to Lorna Salzman, Carolyn Summers, Dana Lee and Sheila Metcalf representing the New York City Dept. of Environmental Protection Natural Resources Unit and the City Planning Dept. Aquila reported a breeding population of four pairs of Sharp-tailed Sparrow and six pairs of Seaside Sparrow at Saw Mill Creek on Staten Island. Both species produced fledglings. He reported that he could find no evidence that these species had bred on Staten Island in the last 30 years. Neither species were found on Staten Island during the Atlas period. Aquila also found three pairs of Clapper Rail nesting and observed adults with fledglings. This is another marsh bird that was not reported as nesting there during the Atlas period.

The **Brown Pelican** invasion has finally reached epidemic proportions. Even the popular press, which reports on "oddities" that make the news, has discovered them. Both the *New York Times* in a story dated Southampton, 20 July, and *Newsday* in a story on 17 August reported various sightings and quoted National Audubon

Society experts. According to the news reports, a total of 150 were supposed to have reached the shores of Long Island this summer. For the more scientific purposes of this journal, one must rely on original sources and compilations from knowledgeable birders. Brown Pelican reports started on 9 Jun with 14 at Fire Island and continued until 27 Aug with 14 at Cedar Beach. A maximum of 87 were counted off Jones Beach on 12 Jul by David Mizrahi. Reports came from as far west as Staten Island and as far east as Shinnecock Inlet. Groups of two to three dozen or more were not uncommon during the summer.

The most extraordinary bird of the late Summer was a **Roseate Spoonbill** that appeared on Staten Island in August. This distinctive large white and pink bird should have been easy to spot. Unfortunately, large numbers of egrets from rookeries in New Jersey had been dyed pink to ascertain their post-season dispersal habits. As a result it was difficult to determine just when this species first appeared because of all the large white and pink birds that were in the area. Dates from early August have been mentioned by Henry Flamm and others, but the earliest definitive report came from Lorna Salzman. While on a visit to various wetland sites, she, Carolyn Summers, Dana Lee and Sheila Metcalf found the bird at the Goethals Bridge on 20 Aug. Aquila was called to confirm the identification and took the first photographs. The bird remained until 29 Aug; it was seen each day until 24 Aug and less frequently thereafter. This is the first New York State record for this species. In addition to the spoonbill, both godwits were seen by those who came looking at the marshes. As an added plus, a Red Phalarope was found on 24 Aug.

On 18 Aug a **Brown Booby** appeared on the beach at Amagansett after several days of rain. It flew in off the ocean, circled in front of your Editor [Al Wollin] and vanished. This is the second season in which this rare species from the Caribbean has appeared on Long Island without hurricane assistance.

Beach erosion and storm movement of sand in the Cedar Beach area created deep tidal pools and "unsafe conditions" according to the Town Officials. A regrading effort in the late winter generated a tremendous controversy between the town and various environmental groups. But by the summer, birders were viewing returning migrant shorebirds that included Whimbrel, **Rufous-necked Stint**, White-

rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Ruff, Red-necked Phalarope and Red Phalarope. The number of Whimbrel seen this season reached an all time high for recent years. The maximum occurred on 2 Aug. Compiling reports from contributors and the New York Rare Bird Alert, there were 35 at Napeague, 3 at Cedar Beach, 3 at the Line Islands and 60 at Cow Meadow, or over a hundred scattered across Long Island on this one day.

The Manomet Bird Observatory Spring/Summer Quarterly reported on the analysis by Dr. Katherine Parsons of the 1990's oil spills in New York harbor on aquatic wildlife. Reproductive success for Snowy Egret and Glossy Ibis was dramatically reduced in both 1990 and 1991.

Contributors: Bob Adamo, Christopher Aquila, Jim Ash, John Bull, Andy Baldelli, Jean & Ronald Bourque, Thomas W. Burke, James Clinton, Sr., Chip Darmstadt, Henry F. Flamm, John J. Fritz, Paul H. Gillen, Anthony J. Lauro, Emanuel Levine, Pat Lindsay, Peter Martin, David Mizrahi, Nature Notes in *The East Hampton Star* by Larry Penny (NN), John J. Ruscica, Eric Salzman, Lorna Salzman, Seymour Schiff, Lore J. Schore, Tom Vezo, Steve Walter, Alvin Wollin.

Abbreviations: CB - Cedar Beach; CSCBC - Central Suffolk Co. Breeding Bird Census; DP - Doctor's Path, Riverhead; FI - Fire Island; FBF - Floyd Bennett Field; JBWR - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; LnIs - Line Islands; LI - Long Island; MPt - Montauk Point; NYRBA - New York Rare Bird Alert; ShIn - Shinnecock Inlet; SI - Staten Island.

Summer reports: **Cory's Shearwater:** 20 mi s MPt 29 Jul (PM). **Greater Shearwater:** 200 45 mi s MPt 19 Jun (*fide* JA), others 20 mi s MPt 3 Jul (PM). **Sooty Shearwater:** seven 45 mi s MPt 19 Jun (*fide* JA). **Manx Shearwater:** one 20 mi s MPt 3 Jul (PM). **Wilson's Storm-Petrel:** 30 45 mi S of MPt 19 Jun (*fide* JA), others 20 mi s MPt 3 Jul (PM), four ShIn 4 Jul (NYRBA), five ShIn 5 Jul (AB). **BROWN BOOBY:** *intro*. **BROWN PELICAN:** *intro*. **Great Cormorant:** one Zachs Bay, Jones Beach 6 Jul (SS, AW), late. **MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD:** one reported JBWR 9 Aug (NYRBA, no details). **WHITE-FACED IBIS:** one JBWR 16 Jun (NYRBA). **ROSEATE SPOONBILL:** *intro*. **Mute Swan:** 380 on CSCBC 13 Jun, 167 East Pd JBWR 22 Aug; firmly established and continuing to multiply. **Black Scoter:** MPt 16 Aug. **Surf Scoter:** MPt 16 Aug. **White-winged Scoter:** MPt 16 Aug.

Bald Eagle: ad pair summered in the Hamptons, feeding among other places at the East Hampton land fill (NN); ad Saw Mill Creek Marsh SI 29 Aug (CA). **N. Harrier:** pair SI from Jun through mid Aug (CA), did not nest there during the Atlas period. **Am. Kestrel:** nests at FBF were down from four last year to one, two y produced (J&RB). **Peregrine Falcon:** six nests hatched 19 eggs, 11 fledged; new this season, a nest on the Pan Am Building. **Black Rail:** one CB 13 Jun (NYRBA), one Oceanside Preserve 24 Aug (John Caspers). **Clapper Rail:** *intro*. **Virginia Rail:** pair nested SI (CA). **Lesser Golden-Plover:** one Riverhead 24 Jul (JR), one to four DP 26–30 Aug, 15 Cutchogue 30 Aug (NYRBA). **Am. Oystercatcher:** 225 LnIs 2 Aug (AL, AB). **BLACK-NECKED STILT:** one JBWR 3–7 July (NYRBA), one DP 19 Jul (Mary Normandia). **Solitary Sandpiper:** one Flushing Airport 10 Aug (George Dadone, mob). **Upland Sandpiper:** a pair apparently bred at FBF, first since 1978 (J&RB), one CB 2 Aug, five Cutchogue 6 Aug (JF), two DP 23 Aug (JF), eight Westhampton Air Force Base, others noted. **Whimbrel:** *intro*, others 16 Jun–Aug 9. **Hudsonian Godwit:** one SI late Aug, two increasing to 14 LnIs 10 Jul–10 Aug; a few JBWR 25 Jul–22 Aug (NYRBA). **Marbled Godwit:** one SI late Aug, one LnIs 23 Aug. **RUFIOUS-NECKED STINT:** singles CB 9 Aug (AL, AB); CB 23–29 Aug (mob, ph); a second stint on 9 Aug awaits positive identification from photos. **Baird's Sandpiper:** CB 25–27 Aug (mob). **Curlew Sandpiper:** one JBWR 6 Aug (NYRBA). **Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** one CB 23–29 Aug, three DP 26 Aug, two Cutchogue 29 Aug (NYRBA). **Ruff:** one black-ruffed bird CB 9–10 Jun (PL, TV), one JBWR 16–18 Jul (JF, Joan Quinlan, mob). **Short-billed Dowitcher:** 3500 LnIs 24 Jul (AL, AB). **Wilson's Phalarope:** three JBWR 3 Jul, one LnIs 10 Jul (AL, AB), one LnIs 2 and 8 Aug (AL, AB). **Red-necked Phalarope:** one CB 11–13 Jun (MOB), two LnIs 10 Aug (AL, AB). **Red Phalarope:** one CB 6–7 Jun (PL, TV), juv Goethals Bridge Pd SI 24–29 Aug (HF, John Stonick, mob). **Pomarine Jaeger:** three 20 mi s MPt 29 Jul (PM). **LONG-TAILED JAEGER:** ten 45 mi s MPt 19 Jun (fide JA). **Com. Black-headed Gull:** ad JBWR 5 Jul (NYRBA). **Gull-billed Tern:** two Cow Meadow, Freeport, 29 Jul, one flying with a fish in its bill there 2 Aug (SS, AW). **Caspian Tern:** one JBWR 23 Aug, others. **Royal Tern:** two CB 9 Aug, two Oak Beach 24 Aug (PM). **SANDWICH TERN:** two CB 18 Aug (PL, Bob Hines), one CB 27 Aug (mob). **Black Tern:** one LnIs 3 Jul (AL, AB), two Wading River 27 Jul, others late Aug. **Black Skimmer:** 600 CB 26 Aug (AL, AW), large number.

Barn Owl: 19 y produced on islands in Jamaica Bay (J&RB), success due to placement of nest boxes. **Chuck-will's-widow:** one calling at dusk Massapequa Preserve 4 Jun (PM), one Riverhead 6 Jun (JR). **Whip-poor-will:** four Riverhead 6 Jun (JR), one Fort Montauk 22 July (JF).

Golden-winged Warbler: one Weld Preserve, Nissequogue 20 Aug (JF), three High Rock, SI 30 Aug (CA). **Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler:** Brewster's type with three y Muttontown Preserve 11 Jun (A. Lindberg, Herb Mills). **Worm-eating Warbler:** Alley Pd P 30 Aug (LS, mob). **Prothonotary Warbler:** one Ft Tilden 30 Aug (NYRBA). **N. Waterthrush:** two Clove L P SI (HF). **Kentucky Warbler:** one Central P 30 Aug (NYRBA). **Mourning Warbler:** several singles late Aug.

Blue Grosbeak: one CSCBC 13 Jun (fide JR). **Dickcissel:** one Jones Beach West End 9 Aug (AW, SS), exceptionally early. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** ten territories FBF (J&RB). **Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** *intro*. **Seaside Sparrow:** *intro*. **Bobolink:** occasional birds seen during the season FBF (J&RB). **Boat-tailed Grackle:** reports from SI to CB. **Orchard Oriole:** one Manorville 12 Jun (JR), two Mill Neck 26 Jun (Barbara Conolly).

Correction: Tundra Swan: 5-7, not 500-700, at Hook Pd winter 1991-92.

603 Mead Terrace, South Hempstead, New York 11550