

REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

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TV weatherman Dave Eichorn provided statistics on what can only be described as normal summer weather. The average temperature for the three months was 69.2°F. There were 9 days with temperature over 90°F. The 12.4 inches of rain was 1.03 inches above normal. Water levels were still high from the spring floods which may have influenced nesting. In contrast, July and August were the two driest months ever recorded for the Adirondacks section of the Region.

Several notable nesting reports were submitted. There were two reports of nesting success for Pied-billed Grebe. Three juvenile birds were found at a beaver pond in Baldwinsville on 16 Aug. One juvenile was seen in Clay Marsh ONON on 18 Aug. Four Northern Pintail remained at Clay Marsh through 19 Jun. Two adults with one downy young were seen on 19 Jun. This is the first confirmed nesting in the Region for at least 30 years. Acadian Flycatcher remained at Whiskey Hollow ONON through July. On 18 Jul, Joe Brin observed the pair with at least three young. This is the first confirmed Regional nesting since 1985. A Northern Parula seen feeding young on 27 Jun by Marge Rusk in Whiskey Hollow ONON is the first confirmed nesting of this species in the Region away from the Adirondacks in at least 25 years; Northern Parula is seen in good numbers in the Adirondacks, where it still breeds.

Virginia Gilbert observed a pair of Carolina Wren nesting at Fayetteville in one of the hanging geraniums just outside her kitchen window. They first built a nest in one plant and then moved to an adjoining one. The nest was started on 27 Jun. There were 3 eggs on 5 Jul and the young fledged on 3 Aug. The Carolina Wren seems to have survived the March blizzard well, with many reports this season. Eastern Bluebird may not have survived the storm as well. Many were seen in late February. John Rogers' bluebird trail north of Oneida Lake fledged only 335 young. This compares with 412 last year and over 500 the year before. The combination of last year's low numbers and a violent snowstorm undoubtedly contributed to this low production.

Milo Richmond reported on colonially nesting water birds on Oneida Lake. At peak nesting there were 348 Common Tern nests; 415 Ring-billed Gull nests; 50 Herring Gull and 60 Double-crested Cormorant. Little Island has been managed for the past 8 years for the exclusive

nesting of 400 pair of Common Tern. With the use of a grid work of monofilament fishing line, other species have been encouraged to nest elsewhere. The first 196 Common Tern nests this year were disrupted by a flock of Ruddy Turnstone that appeared on the island about 30 May. By 2 Jun, only 13 nests remained intact. By 16 Jun the remaining 13 had also been lost to turnstone predation. Most eggs had been punctured and eaten, but several were intact except for the tiny hole made by the turnstones. The terns renested and fledged approximately 275 young from 348 nests.

Both species of cuckoo were also scarce, and very low numbers again were reported for the grassland species, including Eastern Meadowlark, Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow. For the second year in a row, there were no reports of Henslow's Sparrow.

Double-crested Cormorant were seen in record numbers: 980 were at Sandy Pond on 25 Jul, and 527 were observed on Oneida Lake on 27 Jun. There was a record total of 18 Great Egret seen in the Region including nine at the same time on Onondaga Lake in July and August, but there was still no record of attempted nesting. Bob McKinney found one Snow Goose at Delta Lake on 12 Aug for a first summer record. It remained through the period. Seven Bald Eagle were seen in widely scattered locations throughout the summer. This represents a continued increase in numbers for this species. Three Peregrine Falcon were seen. These are the first sightings of Peregrine Falcon in this Region during the summer outside of the Adirondacks. One was seen spiraling with a group of vultures over a stone quarry in Jamesville on 15 Aug. The 108 Caspian Tern seen by Bill Purcell on 14 Aug at Sandy Pond is an increase in numbers for this species. The 30 Black Tern seen on a gravel island at the inlet to Sandy Pond on 14 Aug represents the highest Regional count since 1984.

Common Nighthawk were seen migrating in record numbers. A total of 532 were counted between 19 and 31 Aug. On 24 Aug, Gene Huggins observed a peak count of 222 near Syracuse University. A migrating Prothonotary Warbler was seen in Erieville on 31 Aug by Elva Hawken. This is the second year one was found in Erieville. Last year one went through on 28 July. Another rarity, a Clay-colored Sparrow was located by John Hanyak on 19 June in the Town of Cicero ONON.

Observers reported 188 species and one hybrid during the summer compared to 196 (plus one hybrid) last year. The most unusual reports were the summer Snow Goose and Peregrine Falcon, Prothonotary Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow and confirmed nesting for Northern Pintail, Acadian Flycatcher and Northern Parula.

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Abbreviations: Adks - Adirondacks; NPT - northern Pompey Township ONON; OnonL - Onondaga Lake; SPd - Sandy Pond OSWE; SVB - Sylvan-Verona Beach ONEI.

Summer reports: **Com. Loon:** three successful Adks nests, Gray L, Little Safford L, and Moss L; a new nest was reported at Gibbs L. **Pied-billed Grebe:** *intro.* **Double-crested Cormorant:** *intro.* **Am. Bittern:** only two pair 11 Jun Florence ONEI. **Least Bittern:** only two reports, two Dewitt Marsh 7-11 Jul, one Clay Marsh 2 June-21 Jul. **Great Egret:** *intro.* **Green-backed Heron:** max 17 Clay Marsh 13 Jul. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** only report two French Creek WMA, T of Clayton, 18 Aug. **Snow Goose:** *intro.* **Wood Duck:** max 85 Delta L 22 Aug, highest summer count since 1972. **Green-winged Teal:** max 20 Delta L 16 Aug. **N. Pintail:** *intro.* **Blue-winged Teal:** max 15 Delta L 18 Aug; eight reports. **Gadwall:** two Delta L. 18 Aug. **Com. Merganser:** arr OnonL 11 Jul, max 40 Delta L 16 Aug.

Osprey: eight reports, max two. **Bald Eagle:** *intro.* **N. Harrier:** eight reports. **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** eight reports. **Cooper's Hawk:** five reports. **Merlin:** arr Delta L. 28 Aug. **Peregrine Falcon:** *intro.* **Wild Turkey:** seven reports. **Virginia Rail:** four reports. **Sora:** three reports. **Black-bellied Plover:** arr SPd 8 Aug; max two Delta L 8 Aug. **Semipalmated Plover:** arr SPd 8 Aug; max 27 Delta L 22 Aug. **Greater Yellowlegs:** arr and max six Delta L 27 Jul. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr Delta L 27 Jul; max 15 SPd 22 Aug. **Solitary Sandpiper:** arr Lysander 10 Jul. **Spotted Sandpiper:** max 20 Delta L 12 Aug. **Ruddy Turnstone:** *intro.* **Red Knot:** arr SPd 21 Aug; two reports. **Sanderling:** arr and max 25 SPd 25 Jul. **Semipalmated Sandpiper:** arr SPd 25 Jul; max 100 Delta L 18 Aug. **Least Sandpiper:** arr Lysander 10 Jul; max 57 Delta L 18 Aug. **White-rumped Sandpiper:** arr and max two Delta L 22 Aug. **Baird's Sandpiper:** arr SPd 8 Aug. **Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr Delta L 12 Aug. **Stilt Sandpiper:** arr and max two OnonL 7 Aug. **Short-billed Dowitcher:** arr Delta L 22 Aug; max five Delta L 28 Aug. **Bonaparte's Gull:** arr SPd 25 Jul; max 376 SVB 28 Aug. **Caspian Tern:** *intro.* **Com. Tern:** max 62 SPd 29 Aug. **Forster's Tern:** max two SVB 22 Aug, only location. **Black Tern:** *intro.*

Black-billed Cuckoo: eight reports. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** only report NPT 6 Jun. **E. Screech-Owl:** three reports; three y food-begging NPT mid Jun. **Great Horned Owl:** four reports, one nest. **Barred Owl:** four reports; two Whiskey Hollow ONON 7 Jun, new site. **Com. Nighthawk:** *intro.* **Whip-poor-will:** only report four Constantia 6 Jun. **Chimney Swift:** max six; factory chimney torn down in Manlius greatly reduced numbers there. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** 24 reports. **Belted Kingfisher:** max 15 N Victory 7 Jun. **Red-headed Woodpecker:** three reports; T Paris ONEI 24 Jul, T Van Buren ONON 25 Jul new locations. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** nine reports. two pair nested successfully 1300 ft elevation NPT. **Black-backed Woodpecker:** nest three y Big Moose-Stillwater Rd HERK 21 Jun; ad Moss L.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: last Oswego 6 Jun; arr SVB 29 Aug. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** arr SPd 21 Aug. **Acadian Flycatcher:** *intro.* **Least Flycatcher:** max 13 Oriskany Falls 8 Jun. **Great Crested Flycatcher:** max nine Alder Creek BBS 12 Jun. **E. Kingbird:** max 17 Cicero Center 12 Jul. **Tree Swallow:** max 150 Oneida L 27 Jun. **N. Rough-winged Swallow:** only seven reports. **Bank Swallow:** max 150 W Winfield 30 Jun. **Cliff Swallow:** only six reports. **Gray Jay:** only report two Adks. **Com. Raven:** only two reports; closing the Old Forge Dump has reduced that concentration. **Boreal Chickadee:** two ad feeding two y Moose River Plains 21 Jun. **Tufted Titmouse:** nest, five y W Oswego 22 Aug. **Red-breasted Nuthatch:** max 16 McKeever 13 Jun. **Brown Creeper:** only one report. **Carolina Wren:** *intro.* **House Wren:** max 22 Oriskany Falls 8 Jun. **Winter Wren:** seven reports. **Sedge Wren:** five Caughdenoy ONON mid Aug, only location. **Marsh Wren:** max 30 Clay Marsh 2 Jun. **E. Bluebird:** *intro.* **Veery:** max 24 McKeever 13 Jun. **Swainson's Thrush:** no reports. **Gray Catbird:** max 31 Clay Marsh 30 Jun. **Cedar Waxwing:** max 60 D H 4 Jun.

Solitary Vireo: max 18 McKeever 13 Jun. **Red-eyed Vireo:** max 100 McKeever 13 Jun. **Golden-winged Warbler:** only three reports. **N. Parula:** *intro.* **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** max 15 McKeever 13 Jun and Tug Hill 11 Jul. **Blackpoll Warbler:** singing male Old Forge 21 Jun. **Cerulean Warbler:** singing males in six locations. **Prothonotary Warbler:** *intro.* **Mourning Warbler:** max 10 McKeever BBS 13 Jun.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: max 11 N Victory 5 Jun. **Chipping Sparrow:** max 39 McKeever 13 Jun. **Clay-colored Sparrow:** *intro.* **Song Sparrow:** max 80 Oriskany Falls 8 Jun. **Swamp Sparrow:** max 41 Clay Marsh 13 Jul. **White-throated Sparrow:** max 33 McKeever 13 Jun. **Bobolink:** max 100 Rome 2 Aug. **N. Oriole:** max 16 N Victory 5 Jun. **Pine Siskin:** two reports, one at feeder NPT 14 Jun-7 Jul, one Stillwater HERK 15 Jul.

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