

REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK-CHAMPLAIN

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Following the cool and wet summer of 1992 and the late snow and floods of this spring, June and July were pleasantly sunny and dry. August rainfall (4.46 inches) was almost an half inch above average, and by the end of the month yearly rainfall (22.71 inches) was almost back to normal, thanks in large part to a downpour of nearly an inch and a half on 24 Aug. The month still had 67% of possible sunshine, above the expected 60%. By the end of the season, Lake Champlain stood at about 95 feet, exposing some shoreline mudflats.

The highlight of the season was the first confirmed nesting of **Wilson's Phalarope** in New York State. The male of the pair that had been previously discovered at the Gravelle Farm, CLIN, on 18 May and remained into June. Finally, on 18 Jun, an alert team led by Bill Krueger found three phalarope chicks, which were videotaped with their parent. The juveniles remained in the area until 19 Jul. Interestingly, this site is only a hundred yards or so from the spot where Mark Gretch found Wilson's Phalarope into June during the Atlas period. Attention is also called to the number of outstanding waterfowl, shorebird, gull, and tern records from the Gravelle Farm in the summer reports that follow.

Another high point was the discovery of an active **Merlin** nest in a White Pine (35 feet high), just 75 feet from the pin on the 18th hole of the Lake Placid Golf Club, ESSE, on 4 Aug. Found by Glen and Sue Cameron, the nest was verified by a number of local birders the next day. Meanwhile, Tom Burke watched another **Merlin** at Blue Mountain Lake, HAMI, each morning from 19-24 July. The falcon would come out and perch on a dead tree on an island in the eastern end of the lake; eventually, it would fly off rapidly, never in the same direction, and generally in pursuit of prey, or to harass passing crows. There was no activity near the 1992 site at Spitfire L, FRAN, where the nest, a used crow nest, blew down over the winter.

The late snows and wet spring had an adverse impact on some other raptors. The number of Osprey nests was about the same as 1990-92, according to the NYS DEC, but the number of young raised was down considerably from recent years. Again, the Crown Point platform was unused, while that at Ausable Point WMA was active. Only two of the three Bald Eagle eyries in FRAN had eggs, and only two young were fledged from one of the active nests. Peregrine Falcon did better, with six

territorial pairs and successful egg-layers in ESSE managing to fledge ten young for the first time since 1988 and 1989: Elizabethtown (two fledged), Keene (two fledged), Keeseville (one fledged), North Elba (two fledged), Westport (one ad. present), Willsboro (new site, two fledged), and Wilmington (one fledged).

The Bicknell's Gray-cheeked Thrush survey located more of these high elevation songsters on Cascade, Colden, Gothics, Hurricane, Lyon, Morgan, Pitchoff, Sawteeth, and Wright Peak.

A total of 13 Double-crested Cormorant, 16 Black-crowned Night-Heron, 1,000 Ring-billed Gull, and 200 Herring Gull were banded at the Four Brothers Islands on 12 Jun. A total of 532 Double-crested Cormorant nests were counted. For the first time ever, Great Blue Heron were found nesting on the Four Brothers, with at least three active nests noted on Island "D." Also seen 12 Jun was a White-winged Scoter swimming past Island "C." Five Lesser Yellowlegs at the islands on 18 Jul were an early Esse arrival. The 19-ft "Four Winds" received a new power lift, battery, and motor overhaul. The first of the recently fledged, banded Ring-billed Gull cohort was caught due to injury and died at North Berwick, Maine, on 25 Jul.

Thanks to the passage of the Environmental Protection Fund, the future of the Webb Royce Swamp between Essex and Westport, part of the 2,000 acre Heurich property, seems assured. On a 10 Jul canoe trip to this largest wooded swamp in ESSE, John Brown and Ted Mack found three Pied-billed Grebe, three Great Blue Heron nests, three Black-crowned Night-Heron, two Wood Duck, six Green-winged Teal, two American Black Duck, 125 Mallard, and a half-dozen each Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpiper. Hopefully, the Fund will also help provide protection for other Regional gems such as Follensby Pond and Whitney Park.

Thanks largely to an active corps of observers, a total of 174 species was reported, up from 161 last summer, 156 in 1991, and 142 in 1990.

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Abbreviations: APt - Ausable Point WMA; FB - Ferd's Bog, HAMI; FBI - Four Brothers Islands; GF - Gravelle Farm, Chazy Landing area, CLIN.

Summer reports: **Com. Loon:** platform nest HAMI hatched in 25 days. **Pied-billed Grebe:** *intro*; probably nesting Cedar R Flow HAMI; eight CLIN locations. **Double-crested Cormorant:** *intro.*; max 1,000+ FBI 18 Jul. **Least Bittern:** Duck Hole on Northville-Placid Trail FRAN 8 PM, 4 Jun (TB) most unexpected; Ft Montgomery CLIN 25 Jun (MG) more expected. **Great Blue Heron:** *intro.* **Great Egret:** Plattsburgh mudflats 12 Aug (BK); Saranac R, Plattsburgh, 24 Aug (CM), becoming increasingly regular. **Cattle Egret:** Point au Roche 29 Jun 15 Jul; max seven there 14 Jul (BK, CM). **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** *intro*; also reports from Little Chazy R, Monty Bay, and Riley Brook. **Canada Goose:** Paradox 3 Jun, late; pair and brood of 12 FBI 18 Jul; white neck collar 65J Tupper L 7 Jul; max 78 there 28 Aug, better than expected after spring flooding. **Wood Duck:** *intro.* **Green-winged Teal:** *intro.* **Am. Black Duck:** *intro.* **Mallard:** *intro.* **N. Pintail:** one-three CLIN 4 Jun and 18 Jun (J&RH); GF 8 Jun (MG), unusual. **N. Shoveler:** GF; pair Monty Bay early Jun (MG), similarly unexpected. **Gadwall:** two pair GF area; FBI 18 Jul, a good showing. **REDHEAD:** one Roarkdah Bog near Onchiota FRAN 23 Jul (CM); there are previous breeding records from King's Bay and Upper Chateaugay L CLIN and Saranac R FRAN, but none since 1982. **White-winged Scoter:** *intro.* **Com. Goldeneye:** 12 eggs Monty Bay nest box 4 Jun, with four drakes and six hens present; Ft Montgomery 25 Jun; hen Bear Pd 17 Jul (TM), representative.

Turkey Vulture: max 36 Malone 19 Aug (HW), high numbers here. **Osprey:** *intro.* **Bald Eagle:** *intro*; ad Tupper L 14 Jun; ad perched on swim float on Raquette R (DM); ad Mountain View L 31 Jul (TM, JT). **N. Harrier:** 32 sightings CLIN to mid Aug (MG). **MERLIN:** *intro.* **Peregrine Falcon:** *intro.* **Virginia Rail:** max ten L Alice 25 Jun (MG); seven APt 28 Jun (BK, CM, LS); Webb Royce Swamp 10 Jul (JB, TM), suggests a benefit of high water levels. **Sora:** King's Bay 8 Jun; max four APt 28 Jun; Scotion Creek 29 Jun, a better showing than usual. **Com. Moorhen:** CLIN 4 Jun; with six y Scotion Creek 29 Jun. **Lesser Golden-Plover:** arr Westport 27 Aug (GC, JP). **Semipalmated Plover:** arr mouth of Boquet R 26 Aug; max five Westport 27 Aug (BK, CM). **PIPING PLOVER:** Westport 26-28 Aug (RH, DS, mob), a first ESSE record for this Federally Endangered species; there is a FRAN record from Hatch Brook, near Malone, 6 Aug 1969, by Dirck Benson. **Killdeer:** max 24 Westport 27 Aug. **Greater Yellowlegs:** CLIN 4 Jun, late. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** *intro*; arr GF 6 Jul (MG), early. **Solitary Sandpiper:** *intro.* **WILLET:** two GF 6 Jun

(WK), first CLIN record. **Upland Sandpiper**: old breeding grounds US 9 n Plattsburgh 22 Jun; I-87 between exits 35-36 28 Jun, only reports, but there is little coverage of the vast farmlands south of the Quebec border. **HUDSONIAN GODWIT**: GF 3-4 Jun (SB, J&RH, HK, BK), first Regional record! **Least Sandpiper**: two GF 6 Jul, only peep report. **Short-billed Dowitcher**: several s Chazy R 4 Jun-15 Jul (mob). **WILSON'S PHALAROPE**: *intro* (CM!, NYSARC). **Bonaparte's Gull**: arr 12 Peru dock 29 Jul; max 75 GF 31 Jul (MG); last two Westport 27 Aug (GC, JP). **Ring-billed Gull**: *intro*. **Herring Gull**: *intro*. **Great Black-backed Gull**: 10-12 pair FBI 18 Jul. **Com. Tern**: pair Chazy Landing-King's Bay Jun-Jul; St Regis Indian Reservation 31 Jul. **Black Tern**: three-four King's Bay Jun; GF to 5 Aug, where two pair produced three imm (MG); video of ad FY 19 Jul (BK); St Regis Indian Reservation 31 Jul, the most encouraging season in recent memory.

Com. Nighthawk: APt; Plattsburgh 4-17 Jun, a rather poor showing. **Whip-poor-will**: two Ticonderoga 3-10 Jun, ditto. **Three-toed Woodpecker**: FB, only report. **Black-backed Woodpecker**: y FB; nest Newcomb 14 Jun (RK); male Northville-Placid Trail near Cedar L Jun (GL).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: two Union Falls Road near Silver L 9 Jun (BK,CM), evidence of possible CLIN breeding. **Willow Flycatcher**: several Scomotion Creek 4 Jun (J&RH). **Gray Jay**: FB; Helldiver Pd. **Boreal Chickadee**: Helldiver Pd; Mt. Colden. **Marsh Wren**: many CLIN; two FRAN. **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**: one Riley Brook Swamp (MG), only summer report. **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: *intro*. **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE**: Terry Mt 28 Aug (JH), could be a "migrant shrike."

Yellow-throated Vireo: Wickham Marsh 27 Jun (LS); ad and two y APt same day (J&RH), healthy showing for a little-reported bird, although from known locales. **Nashville Warbler**: nest with two eggs trail to Weston Mt/Nun-da-gao Ridge 30 Jun (MG), record late egg date.

Clay-colored Sparrow: near Mary Riley Road FRAN Jul (TH). **Pine Siskin**: max 20 Elizabethtown feeder 1 Jun (JP). **Evening Grosbeak**: pair Elizabethtown feeder 1 Jun (JP); four Gabriels BBS 1 Jul; max 60 St Regis Falls BBS 8 Jul (TM). **House Sparrow**: leucistic male with white wing patches Wadhams late Jun (DS).

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