

REGION 10 — MARINE

SEYMOUR SCHIFF AND ALVIN WOLLIN

Summer started early this year. June was the third hottest on record with a third of the days over 90°F and two daily record highs were exceeded. Precipitation was slightly less than normal. July continued the trend with considerably hotter temperatures and slightly less than normal rain. July was the eighth hottest on record. August was only slightly cooler than normal, but rainfall for the month at 6.33 inches almost matched the total of the prior two months. When the rain came down, it was unevenly scattered across the Region. In places, the rains were torrential in the last week of August. More rain fell in NASS in 24 hours during late August than in the official reports from New York City for the entire month. The rains did little to wet down the shore mud flats. Water falling on dry pools and flats quickly drained into the ground.

A number of comments have been made by our correspondents on nesting successes this year and on the larger number of juvenile passerines present. The warm, even climate, without significant storm or cold weather during the height of the nesting season, probably had much to do with this.

The results of pelagic trips are tabulated below. The results of fishing trips are included under the species accounts.

Species	4 Jun 90 mi S Montauk	4 Aug 70 mi S ShIn	11 Aug 25 mi S Montauk
Cory's Shearwater	15	500	6
Greater Shearwater	72	500	6
Sooty Shearwater	75		
Manx Shearwater		1	
<i>Audubon's Shearwater</i>			4
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	82	50	35
Red Phalarope	1		1?
Pomarine Jaeger		3	
Black Tern			1

An exhausted immature Bald Eagle was found on Long Island on 25 Aug. This bird made the newspapers. It was fed, rehabilitated and released in upstate New York after the necessary agreements among parties involved. Research disclosed that the bird was a recently fledged bird from a release site in Tennessee, where conservationists are reintroducing the Bald Eagle to the area.

The rearrangement of the sand on the beach front at Cedar Beach has severely altered the terrain so that water does not collect. The dry early part of the Summer and subsequent low rain fall turned what had previously been mud flats into sand and vegetation. This markedly reduced the habitat and decreased the number and variety of shorebirds seen. In spite of this, the site continues as the most reliable location for species which prefer dryer situations, starting in early August for Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers and in mid August for Whimbrel. These birds appear not to have been affected by the lack of wet areas and continued into September. They also appeared during the time period in the area in front of Jones Beach West End #2, also mostly dry this Summer. This latter area is subject to much traffic by beach goers and is not as reliable a location as Cedar Beach.

Paul Gillen reported that the Fall shorebird activity on the Cutchogue Sod Fields was very poor this season. Both American Golden-Plover and Buff-breasted Sandpiper were seen this year, but in much reduced numbers. However, 75 American Golden-Plover were reported to the NYRBA from Calverton on 22 Aug.

In a cover story for 24 Jul, the *New York Times*, *Long Island Weekly* reported on the tern colony at Great Gull Island. This "remote" island off Orient Point houses approximately 18,000 adults at last estimate, consisting of 1,500 Roseate Tern pairs and 7,000 Common Tern pairs. Breeding success was very good here also. Since the 1948 acquisition of this barren island by the American Museum of Natural History for \$1.00, habitat has been restored and the terns enticed to return to their former nesting ground. Over the years, volunteers under the direction of Helen Hays have maintained and nurtured this colony. Technical papers by Hays on deformities in the tern colony were in part responsible for the ban on PCBs. The *Times* article, we are glad to report, publicly confirmed her valuable contribution to cleaning up the environment.

Henry Flamm reported a Prothonotary Warbler at Clove Lake Park, Staten I, on 27 Aug. It would be interesting to speculate on the source of the bird. Was it an overlooked breeder or a migrant?

We received an interesting report authored by Lorna Salzman, NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection, entitled "Extirpated and Endangered Flora and Fauna of the Lower Hudson Estuary, July 1994". This report includes areas adjacent to (including New Jersey) but beyond the bounds of our reporting area. There are 60 species of bird on the list, a significant number when compared to recent breeding reports for the Region. *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* which covered the period 1980-1985 recorded 187 probable breeders in all of Region 10, of

which 169 were confirmed. Some birds are included in both lists. Since the estuary within our Region comprise the five boros of New York City and Jamaica Bay, it is obvious that habitat loss and pressures on the remaining park lands can account for most, if not all of the loss of breeders. All birds on the list require habitat consisting of either open fields (sparrows), wetlands, (herons, rails), beaches (terns), or heavily wooded areas (hawks, flycatchers, warblers, etc.) to nest. It can only get worse!

Great rarities for the period are *Brown Pelican*, *Wood Stork*, *Rufous-necked Stint* and *Sooty Tern*. The stint is becoming an annual event. All require NYSARC evaluation.

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Abbreviations: CB – Cedar Beach; CP – Central Park; CLP – Clove Lake Park, Staten I; CM – Cow Meadow, Freeport; FI – Fire Island; FP – Forest Park; JBWR – Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; JBCH – Jones Beach; JBWE – Jones Beach West End; JIn – Jones Inlet; LnIs – Line Islands; LI – Long Island; NYRBA – New York Rare Bird Alert; ShIn – Shinnecock Inlet; SI – Staten Island.

Summer reports: **Red-throated Loon:** a few Summer reports. **Com. Loon:** a few reports. **Red-necked Grebe:** a few reports, very rare during this season, probably stragglers from the unprecedented numbers last season. **Cory's Shearwater:** *intro*; 6–8 mi off Democrat Pt 8 Aug (PK), 20+ 20 mi s FI Inlet 28 Aug (PM). **Greater Shearwater:** *intro*; 20 mi S FI Inlet 7 Jul (PM), 20+ 20 mi s FI Inlet 28 Aug (PM). **Sooty Shearwater:** *intro*; two ad ca. 30 mi S Montauk 18 Aug (*fide* Jim Ash); two 20 mi s FI Inlet 28 Aug (PM). **Manx Shearwater:** *intro*; three 20 mi s FI Inlet 28 Aug (PM). **Audubon's Shearwater:** *intro*. **Wilson's Storm-Petrel:** *intro*; 20 20 mi s FI Inlet 7 Jul (PM), dozens 6–8 mi off Democrat Pt 8 Aug (PK). **Brown Pelican:** 22 off Tobay 7 Jul (Al Ott), one JIn 7 Jul, 13 FI Inlet 8 Jul, two 13 Jul, one Huntington 16 Jul, two SH In 18 Jul four FI Inlet 20 Jul (NYRBA). **Least Bittern:** JBWR 26 Jun (NYRBA), nesting Wertheim NWR (ES). **Wood Stork:** one flying s Breezy Pt 7 Aug (Mary Hake *fide* NYRBA, no details). **Mute Swan:** 205 JBWR 4 Aug, numbers increase each year (SS). **Eurasian Wigeon:** JBWR 27 Jul (NYRBA). **Com. Eider:** two Sands Pt 2 Jun (NYRBA)

Turkey Vulture: CLP 24 Aug (HF). **Bald Eagle:** *intro*, Babylon mid Aug, JBWR 24 Aug, CP 30 Aug (NYRBA). **Black Rail:** one Oak Beach 11 Jun (NYRBA). **Am. Golden-Plover:** *intro*. **Am. Avocet:** LnIs 7–25 Aug

(AL, mob), JBWR 20–23 Aug (NYRBA). **Upland Sandpiper**: Cutchogue and Calverton early to late Aug (NYRBA). **Whimbrel**: *intro*, one JBCH 20 Jul, dozen CM 24 Jul–13 Aug (mob), E Hampton 28 Jul (NYRBA). **Hudsonian Godwit**: one JBWR 30 Jul, nine LnIs 7 Aug, three 20 Aug, two 25 Aug; two JBWR 13 Aug (NYRBA). **Marbled Godwit**: LnIs 9 Jul, JBWR 14 Aug, LnIs 20 Aug (NYRBA). **W. Sandpiper**: 30 LnIs 9 Jul, 20 LnIs 7 Aug (NYRBA). **Rufous-necked Stint**: JBWR 8 Jul (AB, JF, JQ, mob), JBWR 30 Jul–5 Aug (AB, mob). **Baird's Sandpiper**: *intro*. **Stilt Sandpiper**: one JBWR 2 Jul, 56 on 23 Jul, 28 on 30 Jul, five JBWR 13 Aug (NYRBA). **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**: *intro*. **Ruff**: ad male JBWR 6–10 Jul, another partial molt 10 Jul (Max & Nellie Larsen); molting male Wainscott Pd E Hampton (ES), CM 22 Jul (EL). **Short-billed Dowitcher**: 1000 LnIs 9 Jul (NYRBA). **Long-billed Dowitcher**: two LnIs 7 Aug (NYRBA). **Wilson's Phalarope**: LnIs 9 Jul, JBWR 13 Jul, CM 21–22 Jul, JBWR 23 Jul, JBWR 3 Aug, LnIs 20 Aug (NYRBA). **Red-necked Phalarope**: JBWR 7 Jul (Lenny Chipkin). **Red Phalarope**: *intro*. **Pomarine Jaeger**: *intro*. **Jaeger, species**: Jln 13 Aug (PM). **Com. Black-headed Gull**: JBWR 27 Jun (Paul Buckley). **Gull-billed Tern**: CM 21 Jul (NYRBA). **Caspian Tern**: one Mecox 4 Jun (NYRBA). **Royal Tern**: two displaying at Mecox 5–26 Jun, two ShIn 3 Jul, one Jin 7 Jul, one Peconic 11 Aug (NYRBA). **Roseate Tern**: *intro*. **Com. Tern**: *intro*. **Black Tern**: along south shore from 27 Jul. **Sooty Tern**: imm feeding in the surf at Mecox 23 Aug (LS, ES); Eric also reports along with the details supplied that Jack Passie, a fishing Captain out of Montauk, saw two come to the fishing boat's chum line on 19 Aug.

Chuck-will's-widow: two Oak Beach 11 Jun (NYRBA). **Whip-poor-will**: 12 Connecticut River SP 11 Jun (NYRBA).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Baldwin backyard 28 Aug (SS). **Acadian Flycatcher**: one Captree Summer Count 11 Jul (NYRBA). **Wood Thrush**: one at CLP 28 Aug, very rare in the fall on SI (HF).

Blue-winged X Golden-winged Warbler: Lawrence's type Brookhaven 18 Jul (JF). **Worm-eating Warbler**: pair carrying food Muttontown Preserve mid Jun (Barbara Conolly, mob).

Blue Grosbeak: male in fields off Route 51 sw Riverhead 12 Jun (AL, AB). **Lark Sparrow**: PP 31 Aug (NYRBA). **Grasshopper Sparrow**: numerous e LI locations, none NASS. **Boat-tailed Grackle**: reported from SI (HF) to Shinnicock, feeding young (ES).

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