

REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

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After a chilly start, June became sunny and warm, a pattern which persisted for seven weeks. A heat wave engulfed the North country from 11 to 20 Jun, raising temperatures into the 90's. Wanakena recorded a high of 92°F on 18 Jun. Temperatures for June and July were two to four degrees above normal for the Region. A series of cold fronts in August brought temperatures slightly below normal for the remainder of the period. Precipitation was about average in the Adirondacks and St. Lawrence valley but below average in the Ontario lake plain. By 15 Jun, water levels for Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River were 14 inches lower than 1993, a return to normal levels.

Vegetation began to show winter kill as the last trees and shrubs leafed and blossomed in mid June. Particularly hard hit were White Ash and many *Viburnum* species. Dutch Elm disease was widespread in JEFF and StLA. Fruit production was very good and heavy cone production in White Spruce, Red Cedar and White Cedar was noted.

Positives for the summer include increased reports of American and Least Bittern, Great Egret, American Black Duck, Mallard, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Red-headed Woodpecker, Black-billed Cuckoo, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Thanks to low water levels, the flight at El Dorado was the best in years and featured Baird's and Western Sandpiper along with Whimbrel.

Gerry Smith launched a new Nature Conservancy project this summer, leading an expedition on June 15 to 17 to the Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper property in the Towns of Montague, Martinsburg and West Turin LEWI which had previously been off limits to the public. The best discovery an adult and a fourth-year Bald Eagle found near a wetland

by Smith and Bill Purcell on two separate days. This suggests a possibility of breeding and will need further field work next year. Additional positives for the Lyons Falls team were, Red-shouldered Hawk, and high counts for Common Snipe, Alder Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Parula Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler and Canada Warbler.

The other Nature Conservancy project was completion of the Lake Ontario Migratory Bird Survey which covered the littoral areas of the Towns of Henderson, Lyme and Brownville JEFF. This effort produced a new species for the region, a singing *Kentucky Warbler*. Other interesting results were high counts of Least and Willow Flycatchers and late migrating Tennessee and Blackpoll Warblers.

With it's extensive grasslands and wet meadows, Region 6 probably has the most extensive habitat for the declining (and hard to find) Sedge Wren and Vesper, Grasshopper, and Henslow's Sparrows. This summer, Dean DiTommaso and Nick Leone made a concerted effort to find these species with impressive results. DiTommaso found seven singing male Sedge Wren in StLA and with two additional reports, the total of nine was the second highest in Region 6 history. Leone made several night surveys for Sedge Wren around Perch River WMA in the Towns of Brownville, Orleans, and Pamela JEFF. From 2:00 AM to 4:00 AM on 6 Jul, Leone counted 33 singing male Sedge Wren. By 15 Jul the numbers had declined to 15 due to cutting of the fields; still impressive and probably not equaled in the State. A Region high total of 14 Grasshopper sparrow was found by Leone, DiTommaso and Paul Novak, seven at Fort Drum and the remainder spread around JEFF. Finally, 30 Vesper Sparrow were tallied by Leone on Routes 29 and 37 at Fort Drum.

Another highlight was the discovery of a singing *Palm Warbler* seen on 25 Jun near the Grass River Flow, Town Line Pond T Colton StLA by Jay Hand, Curtis Smith and Sean O'Brien. O'Brien made a tape recording of the bird for the NYSARC report. The bird was also seen by John Fritz at that location on 26 Jun and again on 24 Aug. This is a Regional first probable breeding attempt. A pair of *Orchard Oriole* was reported in the Region in the summer of 1958; this year a nest was found, the northernmost for the State although nesting has been confirmed on the Ontario side of the St. Lawrence River.

Negatives for the period include failure of the 5000 pair of Double-crested Cormorant to breed on Little Galoo Island due to a population crash in their main food, the Alewife; decline of the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony on Gull Island; reduced numbers of the following

neotropical migrants: Broad-winged Hawk, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Purple Martin, Barn Swallow, Red-eyed Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, and Bobolink. Declines in intracontinental migrants due to the harsh winter well south of New York State were observed in Carolina Wren, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark.

In addition to the species already noted, rarities for the period include Snowy Egret, Little Gull, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee.

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Abbreviations: CV - Cape Vincent, JEFF; DMWMA - Dexter Marsh WMA, T Hounsfield & Brownville, JEFF; ED - El Dorado Beach Preserve, T Ellisburg, JEFF; GrI - Grindstone I, SLR, T Clayton, JEFF; HB - Henderson Bay, T Hounsfield, JEFF; HSUA - Henderson Shores Unique Area, T Henderson JEFF; LWMA - Lakeview WMA, T Ellisburg, JEFF; LC - Limeric Cedars, T Brownville, JEFF; LOMBS - Lake Ontario Migratory Bird Survey 2-6 Jun (GS); TLou - T Louisville, StLA; LFPP - Lyons Falls Pulp & Paper Property, T Montague, Martinsburg, West Turin, LEWI 15-17 Jun (GS, BP, SA, MK); OBBS - Ogdensburg BBS, 17 Jun (RL); PPT - Pillar Point, T Brownville, JEFF; PRWMA - Perch River WMA JEFF; PBBS - Philadelphia BBS 2 Jul (RL); PtPen - Point Peninsula, T Lyme, JEFF; RMPD - Robert Moses Power Dam and vicinity, T Massena, StLA; SLR - St. Lawrence R; SLRV - St. Lawrence R Valley; SBSP - Southwick Beach SP; Tug Hill - Tug Hill, JEFF & LEWI; ULLWMA - Upper and Lower Lakes WMA, T Canton, StLA; WBBS - Wanakena BBS 3 Jul (RL); WMA - Wildlife Management Area; WBM - Wilson Bay Marsh, T Cape Vincent, JEFF; WHWMA - Wilson Hill WMA, T Louisville, StLA.

Summer Reports: **Com. Loon:** many pairs, no young seen. **Pied-billed Grebe:** six-eight calling ULLWMA 8 Jun, breeding at PRWMA and Dexter Marsh WMA, single Barnes Corners LEWI, seven at WHWMA 30 Jul. **Double-crested Cormorant:** *intro.* **Am. Bittern:** ten scattered reports. **Least Bittern:** pairs at ULLWMA and WHWMA, singles at LWMA and Grasse R TLou. **Great Blue Heron:** colony at

Ironsides I SLR continues to decline but a new colony, 44 nests with y, in a beaver flooded woods T Morristown StLA. **Great Egret:** two ad PRWMA, single at Madrid StLA, imm Barnes Corners LEW Tug Hill, numbers increasing due to breeding colony in Canada on the Akwesane Reservation. **Snowy Egret:** one ED 20 Jul (PK&GP), one Luff Shores PtPen 24 Aug (SM). **Green Heron:** reports from Henderson, PRWMA, LWMA, WBM, TLou, six y HP. **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** six (ad & y) Gull I HH 6 Jul, down from 30 nests last year; four ad on breakwall CV 9 Jul. **Mute Swan:** five ad, three y PRWMA 28 Jun. **Snow Goose:** one PPt. 5 Jun (DP), late. **Canada Goose:** large numbers breeding PRWMA and throughout the SLRV, large flocks moving south in late August. **Green-winged Teal:** pair Route 37 TLou 9 Jun (MB). **Am. Black Duck:** eight Commerce Road T Massena 20 Jun; ad, 12 y Sand Bay CV 21 Jun; six FL RMPD 26 Jun, three ad RMPD 27 Jun; four WHWMA 30 Jul; pairs often on Beaver ponds in Adirondacks (PO); one LFPP 15 Jun; singles ED and PRWMA Aug. **Mallard:** widely reported, nine families 56 y SLR T Morristown, back to average numbers. **Blue-winged Teal:** one to three Route 37 & Brownie Road TLou 2-29 Jun, singles LFPP 15, 17 Jun, late max 16 ED 23 Aug. **Gadwall:** pair TLou 2 Jun, 12 WHWMA 30 Jul. **Am. Wigeon:** female & seven y WHWMA 30 Jul (BD). **White-winged Scoter:** one female RMPD 2 Jul. **Com. Goldeneye:** first spring male WHWMA 10 Jun, male RMPD 2 Jul. **Hooded Merganser:** three LFPP Jun 17. **Com. Merganser:** two-three RMPD 6-28 Aug.

Turkey Vulture: one-four/day widespread. **Osprey:** active nests T Waddington and T Oswegatchie StLA, no y reported; one in courtship display ULLWMA 8 Jun (PN); one Raquette R T Colton 18 Aug, two PRWMA 29 Aug. **Bald Eagle:** *intro*; pair at Blake Res T Parishville StLA, no y seen (SBC), first year bird WHWMA 30 Jun (DD), imm RMPD 28 Aug (BD), ad Jamestown Falls Raquette R T Colton StLA 24 Jun (PO), ad CV 28 Jun (MBW). **Sharp-shinned Hawk:** seven singles reported. **Cooper's Hawk:** pair with two y T Canton 23 Aug (MG); one Watertown 21-31 Aug (RB). **N. Goshawk:** one pursuing Green Heron T Lorraine 19 Jun (SDL), one Town Line Road Massawepie T Piercefield StLA (PO). **Red-shouldered Hawk:** two, one calling loudly LFPP (GS BP). **Broad-winged Hawk:** one LFPP 16 Jun, only three individuals seen in the Adirondacks, very scarce (PO). **Am. Kestrel:** seventeen separate sightings in the grasslands as well as the Adirondacks, breeding near CV (MBW). **Gray Partridge:** female with five y Valley Road CV early Jun; one to two at feeder near WBM 13-20 Jun (MBW). **Ring-necked Pheasant:** one T Henenderson LOMBS 5 Jun; one cock T Piercefield StLA 4 Jun, recent release? **Ruffed Grouse:** more reports than usual,

max 11 TLou 1-4 Jun, eight LFPP, scarce in Adirondacks (PO). **Wild Turkey:** numbers down according to NYDEC but many reports were received; ad with 12 poults LOMBS 5 Jun; seven small poults Stony Pt T Henderson 23 Aug (LC); five near Tupper L StLA 20 Jun, two T Pitcairn StLA 3 Jun, one TLou 20 Jun. **Virginia Rail:** max eight GrI 4 Jun. **Com. Moorhen:** four ad with four y WBM 24 Aug; four PRWMA 10 Aug. **Am. Coot:** one TLou 22 Jun (MB). **Black-bellied Plover:** arr ED 5 Aug, max three 19 Aug. **Semipalmated Plover:** arr ED 31 Jul, max 19 (18 juv) 23 Aug. **Killdeer:** max 11 ED 27 Jul. **Greater Yellowlegs:** arr ED 20 Jul, max five 21 Aug; one Coles Creek T Waddington 27 Jul. **Lesser Yellowlegs:** arr ED 17 Jul, max 21 ED 17 Aug. **Spotted Sandpiper:** breeding T Massena, T Morristown StLA; max 12 ED 14 Aug. **Upland Sandpiper:** ten reports from grassland areas in JEFF and StLA. **Whimbrel:** arr ED 13 Aug (GP, BC), two ED 18 Aug (PK), last ED 23 Aug. **Ruddy Turnstone:** arr RMPD 30 Jul, single ED 14 Aug, max six ED 17 Aug. **Sanderling:** arr ED 27 Jul (31), max 100+ ED 7 Aug. **Semipalmated Sandpiper:** arr ED 17 Jul (8), max 70 ED 23 Aug. **W. Sandpiper:** one ED 24 Aug (LL & GM). **Least Sandpiper:** arr ED 17 Jul, max 66 ED 23 Aug. **Baird's Sandpiper:** arr ED 17 Aug, singles ED 23 & 26 Aug. **Pectoral Sandpiper:** arr two ED 21 Aug, one ED 26 Aug. **Short-billed Dowitcher:** two ED 29 Aug. **Com. Snipe:** max 12 LFPP. **Am. Woodcock:** max eight TLou 2 Jun. **Little Gull:** molting ad RMPD 6 Aug (BD). **Bonaparte's Gull:** arr 56 two juv RMPD 30 Jul, max 92 (two juv) on 13 Aug, max 30 HB 23 Aug. **Herring Gull:** arr 15 (one juv) RMPD 30 Jul, max 16 on 28 Aug. **Great Black-backed Gull:** four RMPD 2 Jul, max 120 (two juv) on 30 Jul. **Caspian Tern:** no breeding report; two WHWMA 10 Jun (DD); max eight ED 31 Jul. **Com. Tern:** good breeding results, no details. **Forster's Tern:** one ED 20 Jul. **Black Tern:** breeding colonies did well, 280 Luff Shores PtPen 19 Aug (SM).

Black-billed Cuckoo: eighteen reports, one report before 16 Jun, mainly from L Ontario plain and SLRV, three from Tug Hill, late due to cold weather. **E. Screech-Owl:** pair CV. **Great Horned Owl:** breeding pairs Watertown, Canton, CV. **Com. Nighthawk:** one near Tupper L. StLA (PO), two Watertown (RB), singles in city of Massena and TLou (MB). **Whip-poor-will:** two TLou 2 Jun, one Burnt Rock Road CV 13 Jun. **Chimney Swift:** reports from T Henderson, CV, T Morristown, Ogdensburg, T Massena, max 20 T Massena 20 Aug, last CV 22 Aug. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** good numbers throughout. **Red-headed woodpecker:** one Canton 1 Jun (RH), three ad Woodside Cemetery. T Ellisburg 19 Jun (GM), one mixer Road T Ellisburg 3 Aug (LC), two ad RMSP 6 Aug. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** breeding pair with one y T

Henderson (LC). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**: four LFPP; max 14 WBBS, high. **Downy Woodpecker**: max ten TLou 2 Jun. **Hairy Woodpecker**: max 10 TLou 2 Jun. **Black-backed Woodpecker**: one T Clifton StLA (PO); two middle branch Oswegatchie R T Fine StLA 4 Jul (DD); two Grass R Flow near Massawepie T Colton 24 Aug (JF).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: one LOMBS PPt 2 Jun, several reports from Adirondacks, one LFPP, last CV 24 Aug. **E. Wood-Pewee**: breeding in CV and TLou, low numbers in JEFF (LC) and StLA (RL). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**: reports from Streeter's Bog T Fine StLA, Bog R T Colton StLA, and LFPP, last CV 24 Aug. **Alder Flycatcher**: reports from SLRV and Tug Hill, max nine LFPP. **Willow Flycatcher**: one OBBS, max 19 NAMBS. **Least Flycatcher**: poor in Adirondacks, max 20 LFPP; seven LOMBS. **Great Crested Flycatcher**: max 11 LFPP. **E. Kingbird**: many breeding reports from SLR Valley but low numbers on grassland BBS routes. **Purple Martin**: breeding reports from SLRV but lower numbers of adults for second year in a row. **Tree Swallow**: good numbers throughout, max 12,000 T Ellisburg JEFF 6 Aug (PK). **N. Rough-winged Swallow**: one LC 4 Jun. **Bank Swallow**: many breeding reports, max 25 T Massena 20 Jun, last HSUA 3 Aug. **Cliff Swallow**: 15 with y Tug Hill T Worth Jul (LC), max 200+ RMPD 4 Jun (MB). **Barn Swallow**: numbers down 15-20% on grassland BBS; last T Henderson 25 Aug. **Gray Jay**: two Streeter's Bog T Fine StLA 11 Jun, 4 Jul (DD), two Grass R Flow T Colton 24 Aug (JF). **Com. Raven**: several reports from Tug Hill and Adirondacks. **Boreal Chickadee**: nest Peavine Swamp T Clifton StLA 11 Jun (DD). **Red-breasted Nuthatch**: reports from Tug Hill, Adirondacks, Canton, T Massena. **Brown Creeper**: pair TLou 1 Jun, singles from LFPP, Grass R Flow T Colton StLA, last SBSP 13 Aug. **Carolina Wren**: two Kelsey Creek Watertown 6 Jun-18 Jul (RB). **House Wren**: average numbers on BBS. **Winter Wren**: nine LFPP, ten WBBS. **Sedge Wren**: intro. **Marsh Wren**: eight LWMA 6 Jul, six DMWMA, max 16 Grl 4 Jun (RL). **Golden-crowned Kinglet**: two WBBS; one Grass R Flow T Colton 24 Aug; **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**: singing male Peavine Swamp T Clifton StLA 11 Jun; one Streeter's Bog T Fine 11 Jun, 4 Jul (DD). **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**: singles LOMBS, Sawyer's Bay T Henderson 20-21 Jun, Canton 15 Aug (BK), more reports than usual. **Veery**: low numbers JEFF (LC), doing well otherwise, ten RMPD 16 Jun, 14 LFPP; max 23 WBBS, average. **Swainson's Thrush**: eight LFPP, more common this year in Boreal forest (PO). **Hermit Thrush**: four LFPP, nine WBBS, average. **Wood Thrush**: max 45 eight locations TLou and T Massena 1-16 Jun, average numbers WBBS as well; numbers down in L Ontario plain. **N. Mockingbird**: one Route 56 T Norfolk 5 Jun, one south Village CV 11-17

Jul. Brown Thrasher: pairs T Massena, CV, six LC 28 Jun, max ten LOMBS.

Solitary Vireo: eight WBBS, ten LFPP, ad feeding two cowbird Chase L T Watson LEWI (NS). **Yellow-throated Vireo:** three singles T Canton, Rossie, Macomb StLA 4-6 Jun (DD), three LFPP. **Warbling Vireo:** several reports T Henderson, average numbers on grassland BBSs, max 15 TLou, same as last year. **Red-eyed Vireo:** down 40% on WBBS. **Blue-winged Warbler:** one not singing Blue-winged song T Lorraine (DL), one LOMBS. **Golden-winged Warbler:** singles on OBBS and PBBS. **Tennessee Warbler:** five LOMBS; one TLou 18 Jun, late. **Nashville Warbler:** three LFPP, four WBBS, one T Massena 14 Jul, last ED 16 Aug. **N. Parula:** three LFPP. **Yellow Warbler:** 31 OBBS, 65 T Massena-TLou 1-9 Jun, average. **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** 21 T Massena, TLou early Jun, down 30%; eight WBBS down 50%, 18 LFPP. **Magnolia Warbler:** nine LFPP, five WBBS, average. **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** 12 LFPP, three WBBS. **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** 13 WBBS, average, breeding at ED; common breeder in mature N. White Cedar T Morristown StLA. **Black-throated Green Warbler:** five WBBS and LFPP. **Blackburnian Warbler:** 11 LFPP, singles, WBBS, Grass R Flow T Colton StLA. **Pine Warbler:** two DMWMA 13 Jun, six TLou Jun. **Prairie Warbler:** eight LC 4 Jun (NL). **Palm Warbler:** intro. **Blackpoll Warbler:** last 15 LOMBS, two T Massena 2 Jun. **Cerulean Warbler:** singing male Black L Road T Macomb StLA 4 Jun (DD). **Black-and-white Warbler:** 25 TLou, T Massena Jun, increase; four WBBS; two LC 4 Jun. **Am. Redstart:** 40 TLou, T Massena Jun, 17 WBBS down 30 %, 22 LFPP. **Ovenbird:** 21 TLou, T Massena down 50%, 16 WBBS average. **N. Waterthrush:** max six LFPP, one TLou 7 Jun. **Kentucky Warbler:** one Pillar Pt 4 Jun (GS). **Mourning Warbler:** max seven LFPP, singles T Colton 7 Jun, WBBS, LOMBS, T Lorraine. **Com. Yellowthroat:** 51 OBBS, PBBS, up 10%. **Canada Warbler:** one T Massena 9 Jun, five WBBS, high, max seven LFPP.

Scarlet Tanager: five T canton Project Tanager (KC), max 10 TLou Jun, four LFPP. **N. Cardinal:** 28 TLou, T Massena Jun, six OBBS, still increasing. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** six WBBS and LFPP, max 20 TLou, T Massena Jun. **Indigo Bunting:** few reports, 11 PBBS above average. **Chipping Sparrow:** down 20-50 % on all BBS and T Massena. **Field Sparrow:** low numbers, max four TLou, T Massena. **Vesper Sparrow:** intro. **Savannah Sparrow:** average numbers on grassland BBSs. **Grasshopper Sparrow:** intro. **Henslow's Sparrow:** intro. **Song Sparrow:** low numbers everywhere, down 30 % on OBBS for first time in 15 years, down 50 % on TLou, T Massena surveys. **Lincoln's Sparrow:** one Grass R Flow T Colton 24 Aug (JF), one Peavine Swamp T Clifton StLA 11 Jun.

Swamp Sparrow: low numbers, max 15 TLou, T Massena down 50 percent. **White-throated Sparrow:** 28 WBBS, 8% below average; 26 T Massena average. **White-crowned Sparrow:** one TLou 1 Jun, late. **Bobolink:** 14 OBBS down 30%, also down at PRWMA. **E. Meadowlark:** down 40% on grassland BBS"s. **Orchard Oriole:** pair with nest Chaumont Bay JEFF (DP), first confirmed Regional nesting record. **N. Oriole:** 11 TLou 1 Jun, eight T Lorraine 17 Aug. **House Finch:** high numbers at feeders. **Red Crossbill:** two Grass R Flow T Colton STLA 24 Aug (JF). **Pine Siskin:** small flock near Tupper L StLA 2 Jul (PO), late. **Evening Grosbeak:** 13 TLou Jun.

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